



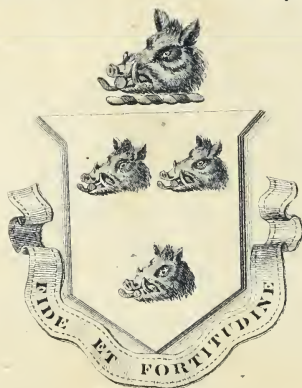
Accessions

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Barton Library.



Thomas Pennant, Barton.

Boston Public Library.

Received, May, 1873.

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AN
INQUIRY
INTO THE
AUTHENTICITY
OF CERTAIN
PAPERS AND INSTRUMENTS
ATTRIBUTED TO
SHAKSPEARE, &c.

To
Sir William Scott,
from the Author.

Fine paper, of which 25. copies
only were printed for presents.

J. P. B.

Holey Place, Dec^r. 12. 1803.

Boston Public Library

Dear Sir,

As I have been long collecting the pieces of *Parade*,
such, I should be glad to see the volume you mentioned,
when you did me the favour to call here some days ago.
If therefore you would borrow it from your friend, so that
I might just have a view of it for a few minutes, while
in your possession, you would oblige me; and I think
I could make a pretty near guess at the date, not-
withstanding the defect of the title page. — To give you
as little trouble as may be, I would call on you in
Marlborough Street, either on Wednesday or Friday
next, (on which days I understand you attend there)
if you think it likely that you shall be able to procure
the book so soon.

Believe me, Dear Sir, very sincerely
and faithfully yours,

Edmond Malone



Q

To Mr. Sewall

Boston

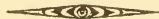
Furnival's Inn.

A N
I N Q U I R Y
I N T O T H E
A U T H E N T I C I T Y
O F C E R T A I N
M I S C E L L A N E O U S P A P E R S
A N D
L E G A L I N S T R U M E N T S,
P U B L I S H E D D E C. 24, M D C C X C V.
A N D A T T R I B U T E D T O
S H A K S P E A R E, Q U E E N E L I Z A B E T H,
A N D
H E N R Y, E A R L O F S O U T H A M P T O N:

I L L U S T R A T E D B Y
F A C - S I M I L E S O F T H E G E N U I N E H A N D - W R I T I N G O F T H A T
N O B L E M A N, A N D O F H E R M A J E S T Y ;
A N E W F A C - S I M I L E O F T H E H A N D - W R I T I N G O F S H A K S P E A R E,
N E V E R B E F O R E E X H I B I T E D ;

A N D O T H E R A U T H E N T I C K D O C U M E N T S :
I N A L E T T E R A D D R E S S E D T O T H E
R I G H T H O N. J A M E S, E A R L O F C H A R L E M O N T,
B Y E D M O N D M A L O N E, E S Q.

D E M E N S ! Q U I N I M B O S E T N O N I M I T A B I L E F U L M E N
A E R E E T C O R N I P E D U M P U L S U S I M U L A R A T E Q U O R U M.
V I R G.



L O N D O N :
P r i n t e d b y W. B a l d w i n :
F O R T. C A D E L L, J U N. A N D W. D A V I E S,
(S U C C E S S O R S T O M R. C A D E L L,) I N T H E S T R A N D.
M D C C X C V I.

151,869

May 1873

DIRECTIONS TO THE BINDER.

Stitch the Engravings at the lower part of the plate, and then fold them in.

Plate I. is to face p. 111.

Plate II. to face p. 137.

Plate III. to face p. 189.

PLATE I.

- No. I. Part of Queen Elizabeth's *pretended* Letter to Shakspeare; copied from the *fac-simile* in MISCELLANEOUS PAPERS.
- No. II. Conclusion of a Letter from Queen Elizabeth to James the Sixth of Scotland. MSS. Cotton. Caligula. C. ix. p. 307.
- No. III. Conclusion of a Letter from the same Queen to a person unknown. MSS. Cotton. Vespasian. F. 3. p. 13. b.

PLATE II.

- No. IV. Superscription of Lord Southampton's *pretended* Letter to Shakspeare. Copied from MISCELLANEOUS PAPERS.
- No. V. A *pretended* Receipt given by John Heminges to Shakspeare. From the same Collection.
- No. VI. A genuine Autograph of John Heminges; from a deed executed by him in 1617-18.
- No. VII.

- No. VII. Two lines of a theatrical Account, *pretended* to have been written by Shakspeare; copied from MISCELLANEOUS PAPERS.
- No. VIII. A *pretended* autograph of Shakspeare; copied from the same Collection.
- No. IX. Part of Shakspeare's *pretended* Letter to Lord Southampton.
- No. X. A new Autograph of Shakspeare; from a Deed executed by him, March 10, 1612-13, in the possession of Albany Wallis, Esq.
- No. XI. XII. XIII. Autographs of Shakspeare, copied from his Will.
- No. XIV. Autograph of Richard Burbadge, from a deed executed by him, Dec. 22, 1593.
- No. XV. Autograph of John Duke, the player; from Henslowe's MS.
- No. XVI. Autograph of Joseph Taylor, the player; from a deed executed by him in 1612.
- No. XVII. Autograph of Nat. Field, the player; from a Letter written by him.
- No. XVIII. Autograph of Chapman, the poet, from Henslowe's MS.
- No. XIX. Autograph of R. Hathwaye, the poet, from Henslowe's MS.
- No. XX. Autograph of Massinger, the poet, from an original Letter.
- No. XXI.

No. XXI. Autograph of Robert Dudley, Earl of Leycester; from an original in my possession.

PLATE III.

No. XXII. Part of Lord Southampton's *pretended* Letter to Shakspeare; copied from MISCELLANEOUS PAPERS.

No. XXIII. Part of a genuine Letter from Lord Southampton to Lord Keeper Williams, in 1621. MSS. Harl. 7000. p. 46.

No. XXIV. Part of a genuine Letter from Lord Southampton to a person unknown. MSS. Cotton. Vespasian. F. 13. p. 311.

CORRECTIONS.

PAG. L:

26. 16. *For* Elizabethhe, r. *Elyzabethe*.

78. 12. Add this other instance of the substantive *Complement* used by Shakspeare in the present sense:
 "Saving in dialogue of *complement*—"

K. JOHN, Act I.

88. ult. of note. *For* in Sept. r. *6th* Sept.

97. 4 from the bottom. *For* take such care, r. *have been so anxious*.

15. *For* Elizabeth, r. *Elyzabethe*.

101. 15. *For* MIDSUMMER'S, r. MIDSUMMER-

113. n. 56. l. 2. *For* vol. i. r. vol. F.

211. 2 of Note. *For* set down in, r. "*sette onne*."

243. 10. In part of the impression, *for* original, r. *originals*.

IT IS PLAIN, THAT IN THIS SLIPPERY AGE WE
LIVE IN, IT IS VERY EASY TO MAKE A BOOK LOOK
AS OLD AS YOU WOULD HAVE IT.

LORD CH. JUSTICE, in Lady Ivy's Case ;
STATE TRIALS, Vol. VII. p. 572.

But hear ME further : Japhet, 'tis agreed,
Writ not, and Chartres scarce could write or read,—
In all the Courts of Pindus guiltless quite ;
But pens can forge, my friend, that cannot write.

POPE.

A

LETTER

TO THE

EARL OF CHARLEMONT.¹

MY DEAR LORD,

THOUGH I have had the honour and pleasure of your lordship's friendship and correspondence for twenty years, during which time I have been in the habit of occasionally furnishing you with an account of what was doing here in the literary world, I

¹ As my noble friend's name appears in the List of Subscribers prefixed to the MISCELLANEOUS PAPERS, &c. here examined, I am authorized by him to say, that he subscribed to that work at the request of a gentleman who furnished him with a splendid PROSPECTUS of it, which he carried from hence to Ireland; and that if Lord C. had known as much of it as he now does, he would not have given either his name or his money to the publication.

do not recollect ever to have employed my pen on any topick more interesting than that which I mean to make the subject of this letter. In mentioning your long-continued kindness to me, I trust I shall not be charged with any idle vanity ; a weakness, if I at all know myself, most foreign from my nature and disposition. If the desire *laudari a laudato viro* be natural and excusable, I surely may be allowed to feel some degree of pride in the consciousness of having so long enjoyed the friendship of him, whom all who know him personally love and esteem, and whose virtues and attainments are admired and venerated wherever the name of Englishman is known.

IT has been said, and I believe truly, that every individual of this country, whose mind has been at all cultivated, feels a pride in being able to boast of our great dramatick poet, Shakspeare, as his countryman : and proportionate to our respect and veneration for that extraordinary man ought to be our care of his fame, and of those valuable writings that he has left us ; and our solicitude to preserve them pure and unpolluted by any modern sophistication or foreign admixture
 what-

whatsoever. Strongly as I am impressed with this sentiment, I hasten to discuss a question in which the reputation and character and history of my great MASTER are necessarily and immediately involved ; and I am the more anxious to seize the present moment, because, in this interval of the political warfare, the cause of Shakspeare and the Muses has a chance to be heard.

PREVIOUS to the publication of my edition of this great poet's works in 1790, I had collected some curious circumstances relative either to himself, his family, or estate, which I appended by way of notes to Mr. Rowe's very meagre Life of him ; and which, according to the modern mode of *making* books, after having been properly sliced and hashed and stewed, have been served up in a late work, without any acknowledgment where the ingredients of the literary mess were found. Since that time I have pursued my inquiries on the same subject with unremitting ardour ; and have amassed such an accumulation of materials for a more regular Life of our poet, as have exceeded my most sanguine expectations, and are now swelled to such a size as to

form a considerable volume. In my researches into the early history of the Stage², I have been equally successful, and have obtained such curious and valuable accessions to what I formerly published on that subject, as to ascertain, with a degree of precision beyond my hopes, the actual state of our theatres and the performances they exhibited, almost up to the time when Shakspeare appears to have commenced his dramattick career.— With all this ardour of inquiry, and all this mass of information, your lordship will easily judge how much I must have been surprized in the beginning of the last year, when I was informed that many original pieces were discovered, in the hand-writing of this poet, which had never before been heard of; and how much that surprize was increased, when I found from the information of various

² When the Books of the late Mr. Topham Beauclerk were sold by auction in April 1781, I neglected (I know not by what accident) to purchase or even to examine the lot numbered 4137, which was sold for 3l. 6s. and contained seven small tracts; among which was one relative to our ancient stage, that I have never met with. If these sheets should fall into the hands of the purchaser, (with whose name I am unacquainted, the Sale-Catalogue having been mislaid,) he will oblige me by favouring me with his address.

intelligent

intelligent persons who had viewed and examined the supposed originals, that every date affixed to these papers, and almost every fact mentioned in them, were alike inconsistent with the history of the time and with all the ancient documents of which I was possessed. These extraordinary manuscripts are at length given to the publick, by whose judgment their authenticity or spuriousness will, if I mistake not, be very speedily ascertained.

It is not at all to be wondered at, that the possessor and discoverer of these curiosities should set a very high value upon them, and thinking them to be genuine ancient manuscripts, should publish them in a splendid form: those persons also who are convinced of their authenticity, have a perfect right to adorn the shelves of their libraries with what they think a valuable treasure: but in this free country every intelligent reader claims a right to judge for himself, uninfluenced by any authority but that of right reason, and the best information he can procure; and by the judgment of the intelligent part of the publick must the fate of these papers be finally decided. To aid those in
the

the course of their investigation, who, though they may fall within this description, may not be endowed with your lordship's sagacity, or may not have devoted so many years as you have done to the most curious literary researches, as well as to all the liberal arts, is the object of the present inquiry ; which, with your permission, I mean to lay before that tribunal by which the adjudication on one of the most important questions that has for many years been agitated in the literary world must now be given.

IN his Preface the Editor informs us, that all the scholars, all the men of taste, antiquaries, and heralds, who viewed them previous to their publication, have "unanimously testified in favour of their authenticity ; and declared, that where there was such a mass of evidence internal and *external*, it was impossible, amidst such various sources of detection, for THE ART OF IMITATION to have hazarded so much without betraying itself, and consequently, that *these papers can be no other than the production of Shakspeare himself.*"

WHAT is meant here by *external* evidence,

dence, it is not easy to conjecture. The writer should seem to have supposed that the labels and seals appendant to the deeds, because *exterior*, were *external evidence*: but neither these, nor the faded ink and discoloured paper or parchment, in my apprehension, come within that description. The only external evidence, strictly speaking, that has been produced, is the narrative, which I shall presently transcribe, stating that these treasures were found in a nameless place, in the custody of a nameless person. If these profound Scholars, Antiquaries, and Heralds are satisfied with that account, I can only say that they are very easily satisfied; and that, if the hand-writing is also to be considered as external evidence, their credulity on that head is perfectly consistent with the satisfaction which they feel in the manner in which these papers have been ushered to the publick.—In the position that “it was impossible so much could be hazarded without betraying itself,” I entirely agree with these gentlemen: the fabrication of these manuscripts, by whomsoever made, *has* accordingly betrayed itself almost in every line; so as to shew, beyond a possibility of doubt, that not a single piece in this collection was the production

duction of Shakspeare, or of the other persons to whom they are ascribed.

THE manner in which these curiosities are said to have been found being extremely material to the present question, that I may proceed in due form, and do no injustice to the editor, I shall give his account of the discovery in his own words:

“IT may be expected (says he) that something should be said by the editor, of the manner in which these papers came into his hands. He received them from his son, Samuel WILLIAM HENRY Ireland, a young man then under 19 years of age, by whom the discovery was accidentally made at the house of a gentleman of considerable property.

“AMONGST a mass of family papers, the Contracts between Shakspeare, Lowine, and Condelle, and the lease granted by him and Hemyng to Michael Fraser, which was first found, were discovered; and *soon afterwards* the deed of gift to WILLIAM HENRY Ireland, (described as the friend of Shakspeare, in consequence of his having saved his life

on the river Thames, when in extreme danger of being drowned) and also the Deed of Trust to John Hemynge, were discovered. In pursuing this search he was so fortunate as to meet with some deeds very material to the interest of this gentleman, and such as established, beyond all doubt, his title to a considerable property: deeds of which this gentleman was as ignorant, as he was of his having in possession any of the MSS. of Shakspeare. In return for this service, added to the consideration that the young man bore the same name and arms with the person who saved the life of Shakspeare, this gentleman promised him every thing relative to the present subject, that had been, or should be found either in town, or at his house in the country. At this house the principal part of the papers, together with a great variety of books, containing his MS. notes, and three MS. plays, with part of another, were discovered.

“ FORTIFIED as he is with the opinion of the unprejudiced and intelligent, the editor will not allow that it can be presumption in him to say, that he has no doubt of the truth and authenticity of that which he lays before

the publick. Of this fact he is as fully satisfied, as he is with the honour that has been observed towards him, throughout the whole communication made to him upon this subject. So circumstanced, he should not feel justified in importuning or any way requesting a gentleman, to whom he is known only by obligation, and not personally, to subject himself to the impertinence and licentiousness of literary curiosity and cavil, unless he should himself voluntarily come forward. But this is not all. It was not till after the mass of papers received became voluminous, that Mr. Ireland had any idea of printing them: he then applied to the original possessor for his permission so to do; and this was not obtained but under the strongest injunction that his name should not appear. This injunction has, throughout all the stages of this business, been uniformly declared: and, as this gentleman has dealt most liberally with the editor, he can confidently say, that in his turn he has with equal openness and candour conducted himself towards the publick; to whom, immediately upon every communication made, every thing has been submitted without reserve.

“ BUT

“ BUT, it is said, that the disclosure of the name of the gentleman, from whom these papers came, would remove all doubts, and settle men’s minds upon the subject. He believes, and is confident, that with some it would. But who is it that says this? It cannot be the real Critic or Antiquarian. He will not say that his art or science amounts to nothing, and that his lucubrations are idle and useless. But if the point cannot finally or satisfactorily be decided either by the thing written, its paper or parchment vehicle, or seals appendant, or the other circumstances under which it was introduced, and must depend *wholly* upon the place and person from whom they came, what becomes of the acumen of the Critic, or the skill and labour of the Antiquarian? By this rule it is a question for another jurisdiction; and the occupation of the Critic and Antiquarian is gone.”

AFTER perusing this account, we are naturally led to ask one or two questions. It is observable that we are not here told *where* the three deeds which are said to have been first discovered, were found. The *principal part* of the whole mass, indeed, is said to

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have

have been found in a mansion-house in the country ; but whether the first discovery was made in town or country, we are not told. Neither are we informed what led the discoverer to examine the deeds and papers of the unknown gentleman. They, however, who recollect the first production of these curiosities, may remember that it was then said by those who gave credit to their authenticity, that the discoverer met the possessor, to whom he was wholly unknown, at a coffee-house, or some other publick place : that the possessor was a gentleman of large fortune, who lived chiefly in the country, and was devoted to rural amusements, but had chambers in the Temple, to which he occasionally resorted : that the conversation turning on old papers, and autographs, of which the discoverer said he was a collector, the country-gentleman exclaimed, “ If you are for *autographs*, I am your man ; come to my chambers any morning, and rummage among my old deeds ; you will there find enough of them : ” that accordingly the discoverer went there, and on taking down a parcel of old deeds from a shelf, in a very few minutes lighted on
the

the name of Shakspeare, or some of his fellows of the theatre, which induced him to proceed further.—Such was the account then circulated by the persons who were the most strenuous partisans for the authenticity of these papers ; but whether this relation may not have gained additional circumstances as it rolled along, I am unable to ascertain. I merely state what was then the report of the day. I am sensible I am *travelling*, as the lawyers call it, *out of the record* ; and therefore shall only advert to one other matter which the statement above-quoted suggests. The discovery of a title to a considerable estate must be acknowledged to be so fortunate and beneficial, that one cannot at all wonder at the great liberality of the unknown gentleman on the present occasion, in giving up to the discoverer all his right to these valuable MSS. ; but one naturally wishes to know in what county this estate lies, and whether any suit has been instituted within this last year, in consequence of this discovery ; as, on the trial of an Ejectment, the learned Counsel employed by the defendants (who, by themselves, or those under whom they derive their title, must have been in possession for near two centuries,)

centuries,) would, I apprehend, require a more explicit account of the manner and place in which these deeds were found, than that which has so completely satisfied the profound Scholars, Antiquaries, and Heralds, already mentioned.

LEAVING, however, these considerations, let us advert to the editor's statement above given in his own words ; the sum and substance of which is, That the unknown gentleman has behaved most liberally and honourably to him ; that he has desired his name to be concealed, lest he should be exposed to the impertinence and cavils of criticism ; (in which he seems to be over-scrupulous, for what imputation could fall on him, if it should be proved that all these controverted papers, which by some accident have found their way among his family-deeds, were forged by some undiscovered person ;) that therefore the Editor thinks himself bound to act with equal honour to the unknown, and not to divulge his name.

THE subsequent position, that the disclosure of the name of this gentleman would remove all doubts, is one, I conceive, to
which

which no person who knows any thing of the rules of evidence will subscribe. It would not substantiate the most insignificant paper that has been exhibited ; though it is justly required, and ought to be made, before any one of these pretended ancient MSS. can be entitled even to an examination.

IN the Prerogative Court, if any Will or testamentary writing is exhibited at a time when, or from a quarter where, it might not reasonably be expected, the party producing it is always asked, in the first place, in what cabinet or coffer belonging to the deceased, or where else, it was found ; how long it has been in his possession ; when, and to whom he first mentioned the discovery, &c. The ground of these questions is obvious. In such a case a suspicion concerning the genuineness of the instrument or paper produced naturally arises ; and therefore to repel that suspicion, and to set the claimant right in the opinion of the Court, he is called upon to account for its not having been produced sooner, and to state where it was found. This is the first thing required to be done ; without which the claimant is not allowed to advance a single step. His
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account,

account, however satisfactory, will not substantiate or establish the paper or instrument produced ; it merely entitles it to be read and examined : and then it is to be tried by all those tests by which falsehood is distinguished from truth. But suppose a person should come into that court, and, after refusing to give any answer whatsoever to the inquiries which on such an occasion are always made, should throw his paper on the table, and address the very learned and respectable Judge who presides there in these words ;—“ Wherefore, Sir, are you placed on that bench, unless you are able to ascertain whether the testamentary writing under which I claim, be genuine or not ? you have the aid of his Majesty’s Advocate General, a man of as much ability and integrity as any person who ever filled that high office ; you are surrounded by many other Doctors learned in the law ; what avails all your reading, to what end have you expended so many years in perusing your INSTITUTES, your PANDECTS, and your CODES, if all your lucubrations, and all your sagacity will not enable you to discern whether this little paper be authentick or not : I will give you no account of it ; but I call upon you to do
me

me justice, and either to allow my claim, or to assign some satisfactory reasons why it should not be established." What, I say, would be the answer to this fine harangue? the claimant would be turned out of court, and his paper immediately flung after him.

IN that court, as in all other courts, it is an established rule that the best evidence the nature of the case will admit of, shall always be required,³ if possible to be had; but, if not possible, then the best evidence that can be had shall be allowed: "for, if it be found (says Sir William Blackstone) that there is any better evidence existing than is produced, the very not producing it is a

³ "The design of the law is to come to rigid demonstration in matters of right; and there can be no demonstration of a fact without the best evidence that the nature of the thing is capable of: less evidence doth but create suspicion and surmise, and does not leave a man the entire satisfaction that arises from demonstration; for if it be plainly seen in the nature of the transaction that there is some more evidence that doth not appear, the very not producing it is a presumption that it would have detected something more than appears already, and therefore the mind does not acquiesce in any thing lower than the utmost evidence the fact is capable of."

Gilbert's LAW OF EVIDENCE, p. 5.

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presumption

presumption that it would have detected some falsehood that at present is concealed⁴.”

BUT in requiring similar evidence in the present case, it is said, we transfer the matter from a literary tribunal to another jurisdiction: we are not now in a court of law.—It is true, we are not; but all the principal rules of evidence, as Blackstone’s great prototype, Lord Chief Baron Gilbert, has clearly shewn in his admirable treatise, are founded on right reason, on which ground alone they are adopted; and this first and most general rule is just as applicable to the papers in question, as to any deed or other instrument produced in a court of law.—The great object, however, of this requisition does not seem to be well understood. It is not from any idle curiosity to learn the name of the original owner of these treasures, that the inquiry is made; for it is of very little importance to the world whether he is called Smith, or Johnson; whether he lives in London or Middlesex; whether he is a fair or a black man; a dwarf or six feet high:

⁴ Blackst. Com. iii. 368.

Nil nimium studeo, Cæsar, tibi velle placere,
 Nec scire, utrum sis albus, an ater homo :

It is not, I say, from any idle curiosity of this kind, that the cautious examiner makes this demand ; but because every new circumstance stated, every new fact adduced, furnish additional materials to work with, and supply means either to corroborate or disprove the point contested. Thus, for example, if it should be said in the present instance, that this gentleman's name is Johnson,—that he lives in the county of Derby,—that he has been possessed of these papers for several years, that his great grand-father derived them from Sempronius, from whom he purchased an estate in the year ——, and Sempronius from Titius, who was an Attorney that had been employed by Shakspeare, or Heminge, or Condell, in law-business, and on the death of some one of these persons without a will, got possession of them ; if this or any other similar narrative should be given, then every one of these facts might be controverted, and eventually either strengthen or diminish the credit of the MSS. in question.

PERSONS who are not conversant with
 D 2 legal

legal subjects, or the true object of lawyers in their examination of evidence, are frequently surprised at minute questions put to witnesses, which they think either vexatious or impertinent; and on such occasions the well-known question which a late admirable comick actor introduced into one of his pieces, and which he rendered still more ridiculous by imitating the thin and stridulous voice of an eminent barrister who was afterwards raised to the Bench,—“ Pray, now let me ask you, was—the—toast buttered on *both* sides?” is often mentioned with much satisfaction and applause by those who have attended more to the humour of the theatre, than the investigation of truth. But the judicious lawyer, when he asks, not precisely such questions as the English Aristophanes has invented for him; but, in the case (we will suppose) of a disputed Will,—whether the testator, when he made and published it, was sitting up in his bed or in an arm-chair;—what was the size or form of the room,—how many persons were present,—who lighted the candle, or furnished the wax with which it was sealed, &c. perfectly understands what he is about; and in cases of fiction and fraud the event

often

often proves the propriety of such an examination; for by the answers given to these questions, compared with the testimony of others and the real fact, the instrument set up is quickly overthrown.

“ BUT if the point cannot finally or satisfactorily be decided either by the thing written, its paper or parchment vehicle, or seals appendant, or the other circumstances under which it was introduced, and must depend WHOLLY upon the place and person from whom they came, what becomes (we are asked) of the acumen of the Critick, or the skill and labour of the Antiquarian?”— To this question it is only necessary to answer, that, it is believed, no person of common sense was ever so absurd as to say that the authenticity of these papers depended WHOLLY on the place from whence, or the person from whom, they came; though the inquirer ought, in the first instance, to have been informed on these points. This information, as I have already shewn, merely entitles them to be read. I concur, however, with the editor, that if these MSS. be spurious, the Critick and Antiquary will be able to detect them. Relinquishing therefore

therefore every claim to that information which I have shewn would be required in the ecclesiastical and common-law Courts, and which in the present case the Literary World has an equal right to demand; and judging of these papers merely as they appear in the printed copy and in the *fac-similes*, which I make no doubt faithfully represent their originals,⁵ I undertake
to

⁵ You may perhaps wonder that curiosity did not lead me to view and examine these pretended originals. I very early resolved *not* to inspect them at the house of the possessor, and I was glad to find that my friend Dr. Farmer, and Mr. Steevens, had made the same determination; from an apprehension that the names of persons who might be supposed more than ordinarily conversant with the subject of these MSS. might give a countenance to them, to which, from the secrecy that was observed relative to their discovery, they were not entitled. I had, however, no objection to view them elsewhere; and therefore very early after their first production, when a gentleman invited me to see these inestimable treasures, as he considered them, at his house, where, as I understood him, he frequently had them in his hands, (in which I afterwards found I had misapprehended him,) I readily accepted the invitation, and waited on him on a subsequent day by his appointment: but these rarities were not then visible. A few days afterwards, having obtained a *fac-simile* of the hand-writing of the earl of Southampton, I informed him by a line, that if he could procure the letter said to be written by that nobleman to Shakspeare, I could furnish a *fac-simile* of his undoubted

to prove, from 1. the Orthography, 2. the Phraseology, 3. the Dates given or deducible by inference, and 4. the Dissimilitude of the Hand-writing, that not a single paper or deed in this extraordinary volume was written or executed by the person to whom it is ascribed.

THAT your lordship may see at one view the extent and quantity of these inventions, I shall, in the first place, lay before you a List of them. In the newly published volume they appear in the following order :

doubted hand-writing, which would at once ascertain the truth or falsehood of the supposed original : I added, that I wished my name not to be mentioned ; and my reason for doing so was, that I was unwilling it should directly or indirectly give the smallest sanction to these papers. He did not, however, procure the Letter in question, and I gave myself no further trouble about the matter.

This transaction, as I have been informed by several of my friends, having been related, *devested of the circumstances which led to it*, and decorated, as is often the case where tales are transmitted from ear to ear, with circumstances that did not belong to it, I have thought it proper to state the plain and simple fact.—If there was any breach of the strictest propriety and decorum in accepting the invitation thus made, or afterwards, in consequence of that invitation, in proposing to the inviter a test from which no genuine paper ever shrunk, I confess I am not clear-sighted enough to discover it.

I. *Queen*

1. *Queen Elizabeth's Letter to Shakspeare.*
2. *Extracts from Miscellaneous Papers.*
3. *A Note of Hand, and a Receipt.*
4. *A Letter from Shakspeare to Anna Hathewaye.*
5. *Verses by Shakspeare, addressed to the same lady.*
6. *A Letter from Shakspeare to the Earl of Southampton.*
7. *The Earl of Southampton's Answer.*
8. *Shakspeare's Profession of Faith.*
9. *A Letter from Shakspeare to Richard Cowley, the player.*
10. *A Portrait, enclosed in the same.*
11. *Reverse of ditto.*
12. *A Deed of Gift from Shakspeare to William Henry Ireland.*
13. *Tributary Lines to the same.*
14. *View of William Henry Ireland's House and Coat of Arms.*
15. *Engraved Portraits of Bassanio and Shylock.*
16. *An Agreement between Shakspeare and John Lowin, the player.*
17. *An Agreement between Shakspeare and Henry Condell, the player.*
18. *A Lease from Shakspeare and John Heminge*

Heminge to Michael Fraser and his wife.
19. *Deed of Trust* to John Heminge.

SUBJOINED to these Miscellaneous Papers, &c. are the tragedy of KING LEAR, and a fragment of HAMLET, both alleged to be in the hand-writing of Shakspeare; but these I shall reserve for a distinct consideration.

I. QUEEN ELIZABETH'S LETTER.

THE first piece which we are to examine is, the pretended Letter from Queen Elizabeth to Shakspeare. As this and a few other pieces in this volume are very short, and cannot be well understood by partial extracts, I shall transcribe them, as by this means my objections will appear in a clearer light.

HER Majesty, if we are to credit these MSS., writes as follows: She no more “stands upon points” than BOTTOM, the Weaver; her Letter is “like a tangled chain, nothing impair'd, but all disorder'd:”

“WEE didde receive youre prettye
Verses goode Masterre William through
the hands off oure Lorde Chambelayne
E ande

ande wee doe Complemente thee onne theyre
 greate excellence Wee shalle departe
 fromme Londonne toe Hamptowne forre
 the holydayes where wee Shalle expecte
 thee withe thye beste Actorres thatte thou
 mayste playe before oureselfe toe amuse usse
 bee notte slowe butte comme toe usse bye
 Tuesdaye nexte asse the lord Leycesterre *
 wille bee withe usse.

Elizabeth. R.

[*Superscribed*]

“ FOR Master William Shakspeare atte
 the Globe bye Thames.

[*On a small paper stuck on.*]

“ THYS Letterre I dydde receyve
 fromme mye moste gracyouse Ladye Eliza-
 beth ande I doe requeste itte maye bee
 kepte withe alle care possyble.

“ W^m. Shakspeare.”

BEFORE I enter on the examination of
 this curious paper, permit me to make a few

* I have here followed the *fac-simile* of the pretended
 original. In the printed copy, I suppose by an error of the
 press, we have *Leicesterre*.

preliminary

preliminary remarks. Your lordship will at once perceive, that it has not been dipped in that stream in which Achilles is said to have been plunged by his mother. It is indeed so far from being vulnerable only in one place, that there is scarcely a single spot in this and all the other papers, in which they are not assailable. The badges of fiction are so numerous, that the only apprehension I entertain is, that you may be fatigued before I have done, for I can with perfect truth say with the Orator,—“ *non mihi tam copia quàm modus in dicendo quærendus est* ;” and the topicks of detection are so obvious that they must immediately strike every reader who has been at all conversant with these studies ; consequently many of the observations I shall make, before these papers shall have passed through the press, may be anticipated by others. However, I shall proceed in my own way ; and if any such coincidence should be found, it will only serve to corroborate my arguments.

THE next observation I beg leave to make is, that this and some other of these papers have, each of them, an archetype, after which it has been formed ; a model, either

now existing or which once existed, on which it has been constructed.—In the year 1710, Bernard Lintott, the bookseller, published our author's Poems, from copies (as I have lately discovered) furnished by Mr. Congreve, which, though not the original editions, were then considered as great curiosities; so little at that time were the shops of booksellers, or the libraries of the learned, furnished with the early impressions of the works of the English Poets. In the preface to that publication, he for the first time mentioned that King James the First honoured Shakspeare "with an amicable Letter written with his own hand," (probably, as Dr. Farmer has conjectured, in consequence of the production of *MACBETH*;) "and that this Letter remained long in the hands of Sir William D'Avenant, as a credible person then living could testify." This person, as appears from a MS. note written by Mr. Oldys, who probably derived his information from Lord Oxford, was Sheffield, Duke of Buckinghamshire. Sir William D'Avenant having died intestate and insolvent, and his goods having been seized by his creditors, this Letter was unfortunately lost, and I fear will never be recovered.

recovered.—Here we have the germ and first principle of the Letter from Elizabeth to Shakspeare, now before us.

OUR late excellent and ever-lamented friend, Sir Joshua Reynolds, used to maintain, that even in fancy-pieces no painter should attempt to delineate the human figure without a model before him, however he might deviate from it; for by this means he would always be preserved from running into wildness and extravagance. Though the fabricator of several of these papers (as I have already observed) had in his thoughts, an imaginary archetype which gave birth to his performance, and after which he wrought, yet when he came to the execution, and was obliged actually to exhibit the hand-writing of Queen Elizabeth, Southampton, Heminge, Condell and Lowin, he had no archetype whatsoever: that is, he had never seen any of the hand-writing of Elizabeth, but her sign-manual, (which he has imitated most miserably,) nor the hand-writing of Southampton and the rest at all. Hence in every part of their Letters, &c. (excepting only the Queen's autograph,) you may observe the wild flutter of fiction; or in
other

other words that unnatural and licentious extravagance and irregularity, which would not have been found, had any model whatever been followed, however clumsily it might have been imitated.

BUT it is now time to examine more particularly this gracious and condescending epistle of our virgin Queen. According therefore to the method I have laid down. I proceed to prove from the orthography, the phraseology, the date, and the total dissimilitude of the hand-writing, that it is a forgery. You will perhaps smile at my reserving the hand-writing for my last topick; as, if I am able to shew that it has not the smallest resemblance to the Queen's hand-writing, the question is at an end.—When a certain Potentate of Spain happened to pass through a town in his dominions which he had not visited for a long time, it was thought proper by the magistracy of the place to congratulate him on his arrival into that part of his kingdom. The deputy-bailiff, as I remember, being introduced, began an harangue, which he had conned with much care, lamenting in the first place his own insufficiency, which he trusted his Majesty would

would have the goodness to pardon, his principal being unable to attend. For his absence, he added, he should presume to state several substantial reasons, the first of which was, that he was *dead*. It is almost needless to say, that the simple deputy was told, he might “ spare his arithmetick,” and that it was unnecessary to give himself any further trouble on that head. By following the example of this provincial orator, and producing at once a genuine specimen of her Majesty’s hand-writing, I might certainly save myself some trouble ; but I choose rather to follow the course I have chalked out, and to take a wider range ; because, though I am perfectly aware that the disquisition is supererogatory, it may tend to produce a more full and complete conviction in the minds of many of my readers.

I. THE first topick I am to consider is, the ORTHOGRAPHY.—In the Chattertonian Controversy, in order to ascertain the spuriousness of the poems attributed by the youth, Chatterton, to Thomas Rowley, the author of one of the earliest pamphlets⁶

⁶ CURSORY OBSERVATIONS on the Poems attributed to Thomas Rowley, 8vo. 1782.

that

that appeared on that subject, produced numerous specimens of really ancient poetry, which when contrasted with the verses of the pseudo-bard of the fifteenth century proved, with irresistible force, that the authors of those specimens, and of the pretended ancient reliques, could not have lived within the same period. By what he called a **DOUBLE TRANSFORMATION**, that is, by divesting several of Rowley's verses of the disguise of ancient spelling, and cloathing some of Chatterton's undoubted poetry in old language, he also shewed that they might change places very commodiously, and that the one was just as ancient or just as modern as the other.⁷ And though the author of the *Strictures* alluded to, and the late Mr. Warton, who a few months afterwards followed him with more ability in the same inquiry, and Mr. Tyrwhitt in his admirable **VINDICATION OF HIS APPENDIX**, produced many additional and

⁷ The former of these methods obtained the approbation of Mr. Tyrwhitt ; (**VINDICATION** of the **APPENDIX** to the Poems called Rowley's, &c. p. 82.) and to the propriety of the latter test Mr. Warton bore testimony. **AN ENQUIRY** into the authenticity of the Poems attributed to Thomas Rowley, &c. p. 93.

incontrovertible proofs of that forgery, they were all given *ex abundanti*, and the cause, in my apprehension, might have been rested on those specimens alone. In like manner, in the present case, it might be sufficient merely to contrast the orthography of this and the other papers with that of Elizabeth herself, or any of the writers of her age.

IN the controversy above-mentioned, it was justly observed that the orthography and language of the poems called Rowley's, were not the language or orthography of any particular period, but of various and different ages. In the papers before us, the orthography is infinitely more objectionable; for I will venture to assert, without the smallest apprehension of being refuted, that the spelling in this letter, as well as in all the other papers, is not only not the orthography of Elizabeth, or of her time, but is for the most part the orthography of no age whatsoever. From the time of Henry the Fourth, I have perused, I will not say several hundred, but some thousand deeds and other MSS., and I never once found the copulative *and* spelt as it is here, with a final *e*. The same observation may be made on the

F word

word *for*, here and almost uniformly afterwards exhibited *forre*: a mode of orthography, I believe, unprecedented. The clumsy fabricator had seen *far* written in old books *farre*, and took it for granted, that a word so nearly similar as *for* had anciently the same terminating letters.

THE absurd manner in which almost every word is over-laden with both consonants and vowels will at once strike every reader, who has any knowledge of the state of our language at the period referred to: but instead of wearying you with minute remarks, the most satisfactory mode, I conceive, will be to produce a few specimens of orthography from the time of Chaucer to near the end of the sixteenth century, a period of above two hundred years. Out of some hundred books of that period, with which I am surrounded, I shall quote a few which happen to be near at hand, and which will shew the progressive changes in the mode of orthography during that time.

To begin with Chaucer, who, we know, died in the year 1400;—I quote from the
 excellent

excellent edition of the *CANTERBURY TALES*, by Mr. Tyrwhitt, who adhered to his author's orthography with the most scrupulous fidelity.

IN HIS *PROLOGUE*, the old Bard, after describing the Knight, who was "besmotred with his habergeon,—

" *For* he was late ycome fro his viage,
 " *And* wente *for* to don his pilgrimage,—"

thus graphically introduces the young gallant of those days :

" With him ther was his sone, a young *SQUIER*,
 " A lover, and a lusty bachelor,
 " With lockes crull ⁸ as they were laide in presse ;
 " Of twenty yere of age he was, I gesse.
 " Of his stature he was of even lengthe,
 " And wonderly deliver ⁹, and grete of strengthe.
 " And he hadde be ¹⁰ somtime in chevachie ¹¹,
 " In Flaundes, in Artois, and in Picardie,
 " And borne him wel, as of so litel space,
 " In hope to stonden in his ladies grace.
 " Embrouded ¹² was he, as it were a mede ¹³
 " Alle ful of freshe floures, white and rede.

⁸ Curled. ⁹ Nimble. ¹⁰ been. ¹¹ A military Expedition.

¹² Embroidered.

¹³ A Meadow.

- " Singing he was, or floyting ¹⁴ all the day,
 " He was as freshe, as is the moneth of May.
 " Short was his goune, with slevs long and wide ;
 " Wel coude he sitte on hors, and fayre ride.
 " He coude songes make, and wel endite,
 " Juste ¹⁵ and eke dance, and wel pourtraie and write.
 " So hote he loved, that by nightertale ¹⁶
 " He slep no more than doth the nightingale.
 " Curteis ¹⁷ he was, lowly, and servisable,
 " And carf ¹⁸ before his fader at the table."

MY next specimen shall be taken from Sir John Fortescue's Treatise on *The Difference between an absolute and limited Monarchy*.* He was probably born about the year that Chaucer died, and in the twentieth year of King Henry the Sixth (1441-2) was made Lord Chief Justice of England. Whether he composed this curious work before or after he retired into France with Prince Edward and his mother, after the battle of Tewksbury in 1471, has not been ascertained.

¹⁴ Playing on the Flute. ¹⁵ Tilt. ¹⁶ Night-time.

¹⁷ Courteous. ¹⁸ pa. t. of carve, v. Sax.

* Published from a MS. Copy in the Bodleian Library, by John Fortescue Aland, Esq. 8vo. 1714.

“ Here-

“ Hereafter be schewyd, the Frutes of Jus Regale, and the Frutes of Jus Politicum & Regale.

“ AND hou so be it, that the French Kyng reynith upon his people *Dominio Regali*, yet Saynt Lewes sumtyme Kyng ther, ne any of his progenytors set never talys or other impositions upon the people of that lond, without the assent of the three astatts, which, whan thay be assemblid, ar like to the court of parlement in England. And this order kept many of his successours until late days, that Englishmen made such a war in Fraunce, that the three estats durst not come to geders. And than for that cause and for grete necessite which the French Kyng had of goods, for the defence of that lond, he took upon hym to set talys and other impositions upon the commons, without the assent of the three estats ; but yet he would not set any such chargs, nor hath set upon the Nobles, for feare of rebellion. And because the Commons, though they have grutchid, have not rebellid or be hardy to rebell, the French Kyngs have yearly sythen sett such chargs upon them, and so augmented the same chargis, as the same Commons be so
1
impoverishid

impoverishid and distroyyd, that they may unne¹⁹ lyve. Thay drynke water, thay eate apples, with bred right brown made of rye. Thay eate no flesche, but if it be selden²⁰, a litill larde, or of the entrails or heds of bests sclayne for the nobles and merchaunts of the lond. They weryn no wollyn, but if it be a pore cote under their uttermost garment, made of grete canvas, and cal it a frok. Their hosyn be of like canvas, and passen not their knee; wherfor they be gartrid, and their thyghs bare. Their wifs and children gone bare fote; they may in non otherwyse lyve. For sum of them, that was wonte to pay to his lord for his tenement, which he hyrith by the yere, a scute²¹, payyth now to the Kyng, over that scute, fyve skuts. Wher thugh they be artyd²² by necessite, so to watch, labour, and grub in the ground, for their sustenaunce, that their nature is much wastid, and the kynd of them brought to nowght. Thay gone crokyd, and ar feble, not able to fyght, nor to defend the realme; nor they have wepon, nor monye to buy

¹⁹ Scarce. ²⁰ Except or unless it be seldom.

²¹ *Escus*, or *ecus d'or*, a gold crown-piece of the value of 3s. 4d.

²² Coarcted, compelled.

them

them wepon withal ; but verely thay lyvyn in the most extreme povertie and myserye, and yet thay dwellyn in one the most fertile realme of the world : wher thugh the French Kyng hath not men of his owne realme, able to defend it, except his Nobles, which beryn non such impositions, and therfor thay ar ryght likely of their bodys ; by which cause the said Kyng is compellid to make his armys and retennys for the defence of his land, of straungers, as Scotts, Spaniards, Arragonars, men of Almayn, and of other nacions ; els al his ennymys might overrenne hym ; for he hath no diffence of his own, excepte his castells, and fortrasis. Loo this the frute of hys *Jus Regale*. Yf the realme of England, which is an ile, and therefor may not lightly get socoures of other londs, were rulid under such a lawe, and under such a prince, it would conquere, robbe, and devouer yt ; which was well prouvyd in the tyme of the Brytons, whan the Scotts and the Pycetes so bette and oppressyd this lond, that the people therof soughte helpe of the Romayns, to whom they had byn tributorye. And whan thay could not be defendyd by them, they sought helpe of the Duke of Brytayne,
 than

than callid Litol Brytayne; and grauntyd therfor to make his brother Constantine their Kyng. And so he was made Kyng heere, and raynyd many yers, and his children after hym, off which grete Arthure was one of their yssue. But blessid be God, this lond ys ruled under a better lawe, and therfor the people therof be not in such penurye, nor therby hurt in their persons, but thay be wealthye and have al thyngs necessarye to the sustenaunce of nature. Wherfor thay be myghty, and able to resyste the adversariis of the realme, and to bett other realmes, that do or will do them wrong. Loo this is the frute of *Jus Politicum & Regale*, under which we lyve. Sumwhat now I have schewyd you of the frutys of both lawys, *Ut ex fructibus eorum cognoscatis eos, &c*²³."

THE

²³ I have selected this chapter, as it exhibits a curious picture of a country, which has lately been so much the object of men's thoughts, and which every friend to the welfare of mankind, and the peace and true interest and happiness of England, must wish blotted from the map of the world.

When we reflect on the pernicious principles which have been made the basis of all their proceedings, and that their successive blood-stained rulers, not contented with desolating France by anarchy, depredation, and every species of sanguinary cruelty, have for these five years past endeavoured

THE following Letter is selected from the Paston Collection, as it exhibits the spelling and

deavoured to light the fire-brands of sedition and misrule in this and every other country which their arts, or arms, or ill-gotten wealth could reach, it is impossible to contemplate without horronr the period when it may be found convenient to enter into any kind of amity with such a nation. The only safety for us, in my apprehension, will be, to form a barrier to prevent any Frenchman ever entering into this country; which would naturally produce a similar prohibition on their part. This, I acknowledge, would only be a kind of smothered war: but unless some such measure be adopted, on the day on which any treaty of peace shall be signed with that nation, on that day will be signed the death-warrant of the Constitution of England. Its destruction indeed, will not be immediate: the man of narrow income will be pleased with the prospect of a diminution of taxes; the merchant will look to his money-bags, and anticipate in imagination the commerce of the world; the leveller and republican will clap his hands, and rejoice; and the gay and inconsiderate will not perceive the ruin impending over our heads: but, ere a very few years shall have passed away,

- “ This royal throne of kings, this scepter’d isle,
- “ This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars,
- “ This other Eden, demi-paradise,
- “ This fortress, built by nature for herself,
- “ Against *infection*, and the hand of war, - - -
- “ This nurse, this teeming womb of royal kings,
- “ Fear’d by their breed, and famous by their birth, - - -
- “ This land of such dear souls, this dear dear land,
- “ Dear for her reputation through the world, - - -

and phraseology of an English Princess. It was written, as Sir John Fenn conjectured, in the reign of Edward the Fourth, before 1479, by Elizabeth, sister to that monarch and Richard the Third. She married, as he observes, John de la Pole Duke of Suffolk, and her son the Earl of Lincoln was declared by Richard after the death of his own son, heir to the crown.

“ On to [Unto] Jan Paston in hast.

MASTYR Paston I pray yow y^t it may plesse yow to leve your logeyng for iii. or fore²⁴ days tyll I may be porved²⁵ of anodyr and I schal do as musche to yowr plesyr, for Godys sake say me not nay and I pray yow rekomaund me to my lord Chambyrleyn.²⁶

Your frend Elizabeth.²⁷

“ This England, that was wont to conquer others,

“ Will make a shameful conquest of itself :”

and, if we ourselves do not live to the fatal period, our children will see the fairest structure ever formed by human ingenuity, deusted of all its glories, and levelled with the dust.

²⁴ So the original, of which a *fac-simile* has been given. By some mistake in the printed letter we find *for*.

²⁵ Purveyed.

²⁶ William, Lord Hastings.

²⁷ Paston Letters, vol. ii. p. 292.

“ *The Christening of Prince ARTHUR.*²⁸

“ ON St. Eustachius’ day, which was in the year of our Lord M.CCCC.LXXXVI. the Dominical letter A, and the ijde yere of the reigne of our saide Souveraigne, [Henry VII.] the Prince Arture was born at Winchester, whiche was the firste begotten sone of our said Souveraigne Lorde King Henry the VIIth, and cristened in manner and forme as ensueth, but not untill the Soneday next folowing, bycause th Erle of Oxynforde was at that tyme at Lanam in Suffolke, which shulde have ben on of the Godfaders, at the font, and also that season was al rayny. Incontynent after the birth, *Te Deum* with procession was songe in the cathedrall chirche, and in all the chyrches of that citie ; great and many fiers made in the streets, and messengers sent to al the astats and cities of the realme with that comfortable and good tydyng, to whom were geven great giftes. Over al *Te Deum Laudamus* songen, with ringyng of belles, and in the moest parties, fiers made in the praying of God, and the rejoysing of every true Englissemán.”

²⁸ Leland’s COLLECTANEA, iv. 204.

SIR Thomas More was born in the year 1480, and is supposed to have written his History of Richard the Third about the year 1513, when King Henry the Eighth had sat on the throne four years. The following passage in that work, which relates to a lady whom Shakspeare, and Rowe's tragedy, have made well known to every class of readers, may compensate for some of the minute verbal disquisitions in which I shall have occasion very soon to engage.

“ Now then by and bi, as it wer for anger, not for couetise, y^e Protector sent into y^e house of Shores wife, (for her husband dwelled not with her,) and spoiled her of al y^t ever she had, above y^e value of ii or iii M. marks, and sent her body to prison. And whan he had a while laide unto her, for the maner sake, y^t she went about to bewitch him, & y^t she was of counsel with the lord Chäberlein to destroy him, in conclusion when y^t no colour could fasten upon these matters, then he leyd heinously to her charge y^e thing y^t her self could not deny, that al y^e world wist was true, & that natheles every man laughed at to here it then so sodainly so highly taken, y^t she was nought
[naught]

[naught] of her body. And for this cause as a goodly continent prince clene and faultles of him self, sent out of heaven into this vicious world for the amendment of mens maners, he caused the bishop of London to put her to open penance, going before the crosse in procession upon a sonday with a taper in her hand. In which she went in countenance & pace demure so womanly, & albeit she were out of al array, save her kyrtle only, yet went she so fair & lovely, namelye, while the wonderinge of the people cāste a comly rud in her chekes, (of whiche she before had most misse,) that her great shame wan her much praise among those that were more amorous of her body then curious of her soule. And many good folke also y^t hated her living, & glad wer to se sin corrected, yet pitied thei more her penance then rejoyced therin, when thei considred that y^e Protector procured it, more of a corrupt intent then ani vertuous affeccion.

“ THIS woman was born in LONDON, worshipfully frended, honestly brought up, and very wel maryed, saving somewhat to sone; her husbände an honest citezen, yong & goodly, & of good substance. But for-
asmuche

asmuche as they were coupled ere she wer wel ripe, she not very fervently loved for whom she never longed. Which was happely the thinge that the more easily made her encline unto y^e Kings appetite, when he required her. Howbeit y^e respect of his royaltie, y^e hope of gay apparel, ease, pleasure, and other wanton welth, was hable soone to perse a softe tender hearte. But when the King had abused her, anon her husband, (as he was an honest man and one that could his good) not presuming to touch a Kinges concubine, left her up to him al together. When the King died, the Lord Chāberlen toke her. Which in the Kinges daies, albeit he was sore enamored upon her, yet he forbare her, either for reverence or for a certain frendly faithfulness. Proper she was & faire: nothing in her body you wold have changed, but if you would have wished her somewhat higher. Thus say thei y^t knew her in her youthe. Albeit some that now se her (for yet she leveth) deme her never to have ben wel visaged. Whose judgement semeth me somewhat like, as though men should gesse y^e bewty of one long before departed by her scalpe taken out of the charnel-house: for now is she old,
lene,

lene, withered & dried up, nothing left but ryvilde skin & hard bone. And yet being even such, whoso wel advise her visage, might gesse which partes, how filled, wold make it a faire face. Yet delited not men so much in her bewty, as in her pleasant behauour. For a proper wit had she, & could both rede wel & write; mery in company, redy & quick of aunswer, neither mute nor ful of bable, sometime taunting without displeasure & not without disport. The King would say that he had iii. concubines, which in three divers properties diversly exceled: one the meriest, an other the wiliest, the thirde the holiest harlot in his realme, as one whom no man could get out of y^e church lightly to any place, but it wer to his bed. The other two were somewhat greter parsonages, & natheles of their humilitie content to be nameles, and to forbere the praise of those properties. But the meriest was this Shores wife, in whom the King therfore toke speciall pleasure. For many he had, but her he loued; whose fauour, to sai the trowth, (for sinne it wer to belie y^e deuil) she neuer abused to any mans hurt, but to many a mans comfort & relief: where
the

the King toke displeasure, she would mitigate and appease his mind; where men were out of fauour, she wold bring them in his grace. For many that had highly offended, shee obtained pardon. Of great forfeitures she gate men remission. And finally in many weighty sutes she stode many men in grete sted, either for none or very smal rewardes, & those rather gay then rich: either for that she was content with the dede selfe well done, or for that she delited to be suid vnto, & to show what she was able to do wyth the King, or for that wanton women and welthy be not alway covetouse.

“ I DOUBT not some shal think this woman to sleight a thing to be written of & set amonge the remembraunces of great matters: which thei shal specially think, y^t happely shal esteeme her only by y^t thei now see her. But me semeth the chaunce so much the more worthy to be remembred, in how much she is now in the more beggerly condicion, unfrended and worne out of acquaintance, after good substance, after as gret fauour with the prince, after as grete sute & seking to with al those y^t
in

in those days had busynes to spede, as many other men were in their times, which be now famouse only by the infamy of their il dedes. Her doinges were not much lesse, albeit thei be mucche lesse remembred, because thei were not so evil. For men vse, if they have an euil turne, to write it in marble; & whoso doth vs a good tourne, we write it in duste; which is not worst proued by her, for at this daye shee beggeth of many at this daye liuing, y^t at this day had begged if she had not bene.”²⁹

“ *The Christening of Prince EDWARD, the most dearest sonne of King Henry 8th, of that Name.*³⁰

“ BY the provision of the living God on the 12th day of October the Feast of St.

²⁹THE WORKES of Sir Thomas More, p. 56. Rastell's edit. 1557. I have adhered faithfully to the original spelling, but have in general supplied the *m's* and *n's*, which it was the fashion of that time frequently to omit in writing, (placing a mark of abbreviation over the word) and still oftner in printed books, for the sake of getting a certain number of words into a line. *M̄* for *men*, *s̄* for *sent*, and *Lōdō* for *London*, would hardly have been intelligible to a modern reader.

³⁰ Leland's COLLECTANEA, ii. 670.

Wilfride, the vigil of St. Edward, which was on the Friday, about 2 of the clock in the morning was borne at HAMPTON COURT, Edward, sonne to King Henry the 8th, in the yeare of our Lord one M.V.XXXVII;* the Dominicall letter was G. in the XXIXth yeare of the reigne of our Souveraigne Lord; which was not christened till the Monday next following.

“ INCONTINENT after the birth, *Te Deum* was song in the cathedrall church of Paules, right solempnly, and in all the other churches of LONDON; and many great fires in every streete, and so continued till night. And there was there goodly banqueting and triumphing, with shooting of gunns all day and night in the goodliest manner that might be devised. And messengers were sent to all the Estates and citties of the realme of that most joyfull and comfortable tydings, to whome were given great and large gifts. And over all *Te Deum* was sung with ringing of bells, and in the most part fiers made in praise of God, and rejoycing of all Englishmen.

* In the original there was probably a C. over the first V. which the editor of Leland's COLLECTANEA has omitted.

“ *The Preparations ordeined for the said
Christening at HAMPTON COURT.*

“ FIRST, The going to the church began at the presence lodging, conveyed through the counsell chamber to the gally leading through the Kings great chamber, and so through the hall and the second court to the gally that goeth to the chappell, standing all that way torches borne by the Kings servants and other noblemens servants, and all that way barred where no walles be, and richly hung, and strawed with rushes.

“ AT the chappell dore a large porch, and the same covered with rich cloth of gould or arras, and double hanged with arras rich, and the flore borded, and covered with carpetts. - - -

“ THIS order was followed for going from the Princes lodging to the christening.

“ FIRST certein Gentlemen, Esquires & Knights. - - -

“ THEN the 3 Lords CHAMBERLEINS, and the Lord CHAMBERLEIN of England in the middest. - - -

“ THEN the Chrysom richly garnished, borne by the Lady Elizabeth, the Kings daughter : the same lady, for her tender age,

was borne by the Viscount Beauchamp, with the assistance of the Lord Morley," &c.

FROM the SONGES AND SONETTES of Lord Surrey, I select the following short poem written by an uncertain author, about the year 1540.

*The Louer declareth his paines to exceede far
the paines of hell.*

“ THE soules that lacked grace,
 “ Which lye in bitter paine,
 “ Are not in such a place,
 “ As foolish folke do faine :

“ Tormented all with fire,
 “ And boile in leade againe,
 “ With serpents full of ire,
 “ Stong oft with deadly paine ;

“ Then cast in frosen pittes,
 “ To freze there certaine howers ;
 “ And for their painfull fittes,
 “ Apointed tormentours.

“ No, no, it is not so,
 “ Their sorow is not such :

“ And yet they haue of wo,
 “ I dare say twise as much ;

“ Which comes because they lack
 “ The sight of the Godhed,
 “ And be from that kept back
 “ Wherewith are aungels fed.

“ This

- “ This thing know I by loue,
 “ Through absence, crueltie,
 “ Which makes me for to proue
 “ Hell pain before I dye.
- “ There is no tong can tell
 “ My thousand part of care ;
 “ Ther may no fire in hell
 “ With my desire compare.
- “ No boyling leade can pas
 “ My scalding sighes in hete ;
 “ Nor snake that euer was,
 “ With stinging can so frete
- “ A true and tender hert,
 “ As my thoughtes dayly doe ;
 “ So that I know but smart,
 “ And that which longes thereto.
- “ O Cupid, Venus son,
 “ As thou hast showed thy might
 “ And hast this conquest woon,
 “ Now end the same aright :
- “ And as I am thy slaue,
 “ Contented with all this,
 “ So helpe me soone to haue
 “ My perfect earthly blisse.”³¹

³¹ SONGES AND SONETTES by Henry Hawarde, late earle of Surrey, and other. Printed for Richard Tottel ; 8vo. 1557.

IN February 1548-9, the Protector and Council were apprehensive that too great familiarity subsisted between the Princess Elizabeth and Lord Seymour, brother to the Protector, and then Lord High Admiral of England, which might end in their marriage; Seymour having recently lost his wife, Queen Catharine Parr, the widow of Henry the Eighth, who died in childbed in Sept. 1548, at Sudley in Gloucestershire. On that occasion the young Princess, in consequence of the Confessions of Thomas Parry her Cofferer, and Catharine Aschylve, (or Ashley) one of her female attendants, was herself personally examined at Hatfield; and her Confession (a very innocent one) is preserved among the Burghley Papers. It consists of eleven Articles, and the concluding paragraph; but this paragraph and the first article, alone, being in her own hand-writing, and printed from the original, I shall confine myself to those only: and in the present inquiry it may be curious to compare her orthography with that which has been attributed to her near forty years afterwards:

*The Confession of the Lady Elezabeyths
Grace.*

I. “ KAT. Aschylve tolde me, after that my Lord Admiralde was married to the Quene, that if my Lorde might haue had his owne wil, he wolde haue had me, afore the Quene. Than I asked her how she knewe that: than she sayd, she knewe it wel inough, bothe by him selfe and by others. The place, wher she said this, I haue forgotten, for she hathe spoken to me of him manye times, and of the wiche I haue forgotten diuers times.

[THE second and the nine following Articles are in the hand-writing of Mr. Tyrwhitt. Then the Princess added in her own hand-writing what follows.]

“ MY Lorde, thes ar the Articles wiche I do remember; that bothe she and the Coferar talked with me of; and if ther be anye moe behind, wiche I have not declared as yet, I shall most hartely desire your Lordship and the rest of the Counsel, not to thinke that I do willingeli concille them, but that I have indide forgotten them. For
if

if I did knowe them, and did not declare them, I wer wonderfullye and aboue al the reste to be rebuked, consideringe how frindely your Grace has bothe writen to me in Letters, and conselled me by messages, to declare what I knowe hirein. Also I assure your Lordship that if ther be any more wiche I haue not tolde (wiche I thinke there be not) I wil send you worde of them, as the come to my minde.

Your assured frende to my litel power,

ELIZABETH.³²

THE Dedication of Sir Philip Sydney's *ARCADIA*, written probably about the year 1580, will furnish us with the familiar address and orthography of that time.

*“ To My Deare Lady and Sister, the
Countesse of Pembroke.*

“ HERE now haue you (most deare, and most worthye to bee most deare Lady,) this idle worke of mine: which I feare (like the spiders webbe) will be thought fitter

³² BURGHLEY PAPERS, Vol. i. p. 102.

to be swept away, then worne to any other purpose. For my part, in very trueth, (as the cruell fathers among the Greekes were wont to doe to the babes they would not foster,) I could well find in my heart to cast out in some desert of forgetfulnesse this childe, which I am loath to father. But you desired me to doe it, and your desire to my heart is an absolute commaundement. Now, it is done onely for you, only to yow : if you keep it to your self, or to such friends, who will weigh errors in the bal-
 lance of good will, I hope, for the fathers sake, it will be pardoned, perchaunce made much of, though in it selfe it have deformities. For, indeed, for seuerer eies it is not, being but a trifle, and that triflingly handled. Your deare selfe can best witnes the manner, being done in loose sheetes of paper, most of it in your presence, the rest, by sheetes sent vnto you, as fast as they were done. In summe, a young head, not so wel staid as I would it were, (and shall be when God will,) hauing many many fancies begotten in it, if it had not beene in some way deliuered, woulde haue growen a monster ; and more sorie might I be that they came in, then that they gat out. But his chiefe safetie shall be,

the not walking abroad, and his chief protection, the bearing the livery of your name ; which (if much much good will doe not. deceiue me) is worthie to be a sanctuarie for a greater offender. This say I, because I know the vertue so ; and this say I, because it may be euer so, or to say better, because it will be euer so. Reade it then at your idle times ; and the follies your good iudgement will finde in it, blame not, but laugh at. And so looking for no better stuffe, then, as in a haberdashers shoppe, glasses, or feathers, you will continue to loue the writer, who doth exceedingly loue you, and moste moste heartilie praies you may long liue, to be a principall ornament to the family of the Sidneis.

Your louing brother,

Philip Sidney.³³

FROM Puttenham's ARTE OF ENGLISH POESIE, published in 1589, I select the following passage, because it contains some of the poetry of our Virgin Queen, probably in her own orthography :

³³ Not having the original quarto edition of 1590, I quote from the folio, 1593.

“ So doth this figure, which therefore I call the *Gorgious*, polish our speech, and as it were attire it with copious and pleasant amplifications, and much varietie of sentences all running vpon one point, & to one intēt; so as I doubt whether I may terme it a figure, or rather a masse of many figurative speaches, applied to the bewtifying of our tale or argumēt. In a worke of ours intituled *PHILOCALIA*, we have strained to shew the vse & application of this figure and all others mentioned in this booke; to which we referre you. I find none example in Englishe meetre, so well maintayning this figure as that dittie of her Maiesties owne making, passing sweete and harmonically, which figure beyng, as his very originall name purporteth, the most bewtifull and gorgious of all others, it asketh in reason to be reserued for a last *complement*, and desciphred by the arte of a Ladies penne, her selfe beyng the most bewtifull, or rather bewtie of Queenes. And this was the occasion: Our soueraigne Lady perceiuing how by the Sc. Q. [Scottish Queen’s] residence within this realme at so great libertie and ease, as were skarce meete for so great and daungerous a prysoner, bred

secret factions among her people, and made many of the nobilitie incline to fauour her partie ; (some of them desirous of innouation in the state, others aspiring to greater fortunes by her libertie and life ;) the Queene, our soueraigne Lady, to declare that she was nothing ignorant of those secret practizes, though she had long with great wisdome and pacience dissembled it, writeth this Ditty, most sweet and sententious, not hiding from all such aspiring minds the daunger of their ambition and disloyaltie : which afterward fell out most truly by th' exemplary chastisement of sundry persons, who in favour of the said Sc. Q. declining from her Maiestie, sought to interrupt the quiet of the realme by many euill and vndutifull practizes. The ditty is as followeth :

“ THE doubt of future foes
 “ Exiles my present joy,
 “ And wit me warns to shun such snares
 “ As threaten mine annoy.

“ For falshood now doth flow
 “ And subject faith doth ebbe,
 “ Which would not be, if reason rul'd,
 “ Or wisdom wev'd the webbe.

“ But

- “ But clowdes of tois untried
 “ Do cloake aspiring mindes,
 “ Which turne to raigne of late repent,
 “ By course of changed windes.
- “ The toppe of hope supposed
 “ The roote of ruth will be,
 “ And fruitlesse all their graffed guiles,
 “ As shortly ye shall see.
- “ Then dazell'd eyes with pride,
 “ Which great ambition blinds,
 “ Shalbe unseeld by worthy wights,
 “ Whose foresight falshood finds.
- “ The daughter of debate,
 “ That eke discord doth sowe,
 “ Shal reap no gaine, where former rule
 “ Hath taught still peace to growe.
- “ No forreine banisht wight
 “ Shal ancre in this port;
 “ Our realme it brookes no strangers force,
 “ Let them elsewhere resort.
- “ Our rusty sworde with rest
 “ Shall first his edge employ,
 “ To poll their toppes that seeke such change,
 “ And gape for [such like] joy.”³⁴

THE

³⁴ *Arte of Eng. Poesy*, 4to. 1589, p. 207. This sonnet, Dr. Percy thinks [*Reliques of Anc. Eng. Poetry*, ii. 205.] was composed in 1569, not long before the Duke of Norfolk and

THE FAERY QUEENE of Spencer, whose orthography is at least as ancient as that of any of his contemporaries, opens thus :

“ Lo I the man, whose Muse whylome did maske,
 “ As time her taught, in lowly shephards weeds,
 “ Am now enforst a farre vnfitter taske,
 “ For trumpets sterne to change mine oaten
 reeds :
 “ And sing of Knights and Ladies gentle deeds,
 “ Whose praises hauing slept in silence long,
 “ Mee, all too meane, the sacred Muse areeds
 “ To blazon broade emongst her learned throng :
 “ Fierce warres and faithfull loues shall moralize
 my song.”

and some other noblemen were taken into custody. In a late collection compiled from the papers of Sir John Harrington, [*Nugæ Antiquæ*, i. 58. first edit.] is a Letter written probably by Sir John, giving a curious account of the manner in which this ditty “ of her highness own enditing,” got abroad : “ My lady Wiloughby did covertly get it on her Majesties tablet, and had much hazard in so doing; for the Queen did find out the thief, and chid for spreading evil bruit of her writing such toyes, when other matters did so occupy her employment at this time; and was fearful of being thought too lightly of for so doing. But marvel not, good Madam; her Highness doth frame her selfe to all occasions, to all times, and to all things both in business and pastime, as may witness this her Sonnet.”

To

To this I shall subjoin one of the Dedicatory Epistles of the same author, which will furnish us with the mode of address at that period from a poet to a patron :

“ *To the right Honourable, the LADIE
COMPTON and MOUNTEGLE.*

“ MOST faire and vertuous Ladie ; hauing often sought opportunitie by some good meanes to make knowen to your Ladiship the humble affection and faithfull duetie, which I haue alwaies professed, and am bound to beare to that House³⁵ from whence yee spring, I haue at length found occasion to remēber the same, by making a simple

³⁵ Sir John Spencer of Althorpe, who died Nov. 8, 1580, leaving five sons and six daughters, one of whom was Anne, the lady here addressed ; married first to Sir William Stanley, Lord Mountegle ; afterwards to Henry Compton, Lord Compton ; and finally to Robert, Lord Buckhurst. She was now the widow of Lord Compton, who died in Dec. 1589.—In his Address to Lady Strange, one of Lady Compton’s sisters, Spencer speaks of “ the private bands of *affinitie*, which it had pleased her ladyship to acknowledge.”

From Sir John Spencer, the noble lord who now presides with such distinguished reputation at the Board of Admiralty, is the tenth in lineal descent, and therefore is remotely related to the celebrated poet who bore his name.

present

present to you of these my idle labours ; which hauing long sithens composed in the raw concept of my youth, I lately amongst other papers lighted vpon, and was by others, which liked the same, mouued to set them foorth. Simple is the deuice, and the composition meane, yet carrieth some delight, euen the rather because of the simplicitie & meannesse thus personated. The same I beseech your Ladiship take in good part, as a pledge of that profession which I haue made to you, and keepe with you vntill with some other more worthie labour I do redeeme it out of your hands,³⁶ and discharge my vtmost dutie. Till then wishing your Ladiship all increase of honour and happiness, I humblie take leaue.

Your La: euer

humbly ;

ED. SP."³⁷

³⁶ Shakspeare had perhaps this passage in his thoughts, when he wrote his Dedication of the *Venus and Adonis*: " — and vow to take advantage of all idle hours, till I have honoured you with some graver labour." See it in a subsequent page.

³⁷ Epistle Dedicatory to MOTHER HUBBERD'S TALE, 4to. 1591.

IN 1593 John Norden prefixed to his SPECULUM BRITANNIÆ the following address to Lord Burghley :

“ HAVING by your honourable meane, (my good Lord) obtained, at the hands of my sacred SOVEREIGNE, gracious passe & privilege for mine intended labours, the description of famous ENGLAND, I cannot but in dutie render unto your Honor condigne thanks, and with all diligence and dutifull endeuour proceed therein : hoping that although (in regarde of my long sicknes & other impediments) this beginning carrie not so absolute perfection, as in your wisdom may be required, yet, may I enjoy your patient directions, and gracious assistance, I shall effect the residue more fully to answere honorable expectations.

Your Honors in all dutie,

JO. NORDEN.”

As we shall presently have occasion to examine a pretended Letter of our poet to Lord Southampton, I shall close these specimens with his two undoubted epistles to that nobleman ; the only prose compositions

sitions of his writing, not in a dramattick form, (if we except the argument prefixed to his LUCRECE,) now known to be extant. To his VENUS AND ADONIS the epistle dedicatory is as follows :

“ *To the Right Honorable Henry Wriothleslie,*
EARLE OF SOUTHAMPTON, *and* BARON
OF TICHFIELD.

“ RIGHT Honorable, I know not how I shall offend in dedicating my unpolisht lines to your Lordship, nor how the world wil censure mee for chusing so strong a proppe to support so weake a burthen: onely if your Honor seeme but pleased, I account my selfe highly praised, and vow to take advantage of all idle houres, till I have honoured you with some graver labour. But if the first heire of my invention prove deformed, I shall be sory it had so noble a god-father; and neuer after eare³⁸ so barren a land, for feare it yeeld me still so bad a harvest. I leaue it to your Honourable survey, and your Honour to your hearts content, which I

³⁸ Plow.

wish may alwayes answer your owne wish,
and the worlds hopefull expectation.

Your Honors in all dutie,

William Shakespeare.”³⁹

HIS LUCRECE he thus presented to the
same nobleman, about a year afterwards :

“*To the Right Honourable Henry Wriothesley,
EARLE OF SOUTHAMPTON, and BARON
OF TICHFIELD.*

THE loue I dedicate to your Lordship is
without end ; whereof this pamphlet with-
out beginning is but a superfluous moiety.

³⁹ VENUS AND ADONIS, 16mo. 1596.—This poem was entered on the Stationers’ Books, by Richard Field, April 18, 1593; and I long since conjectured that it was printed in that year, though I have never seen an earlier edition than that above quoted, which is in my possession. Since I published that poem my conjecture has been confirmed, beyond a doubt; the following entry having been found in an ancient MS. Diary, which some time since was in the hands of an acquaintance of Mr. Steevens, by whom it was communicated to me: “12th of June, 1593. For the Survay of Fraunce, with the Venus and Athonay p^r Shakspeare, xii.d.”

The warrant I have of your Honourable disposition, not the worth of my untutored lines, makes it assured of acceptance. What I haue done is yours, what I haue to doe is yours, being part in all I haue deuoted yours. Were my worth greater, my duety would shew greater; meane time, as it is, it is bound to your Lordship, to whom I wish long life still lengthned with all hap-pinesse.

Your Lordships in all duety,

William Shakespeare.”⁴⁰

IT is wholly unnecessary to make any observations on these genuine specimens of the orthography and language of Shakspeare's age, as well as of the preceding century. Without the aid of other specimens of Elizabeth's own orthography, almost at the very period to which her Letter must be referred, (which will be given hereafter,) they prove decisively and at the first view, that the paper before us, in which such laboured and capricious deformity of spelling

⁴⁰ RAPE OF LUCRECE, 4to. 1594. This poem was entered on the Stationers' Books, May 9, 1594, by John Harrison, sen. by whom it was published.

is introduced, was not written by her Majesty, but is an entire forgery.

THE spelling, however, of two or three words in this royal epistle demands particular notice. *Masterre* was not the spelling of the word *Master* at this period, but *Maister*.⁴¹ The omission of the letter *r*

⁴¹ Out of an hundred instances that might be produced in proof of this assertion, I shall give only the following : *A Sighthe of the Portugal Pearle, that is, the answer of D. Haddon, Maister of the Requests unto our souveraigne Lady Elizabeth, &c.* 16^o. 1565. So, *The Secrets of Maister Alexis of Piemont, &c.* 4to. 1595. *Palladis Tamia, Wits Treasury, &c. by Francis Meres, Maister of Arts,* 8vo. 1598.—“ Unto this *Maister* D. Gager replying, and desiring *Maister* Rainoldes to forbear, *Maister* Rainoldes did rejoyne as followeth.” [30 May, 1593.] *Th’ Overthrow of Stage-Playes*, 4to. 1599. So, in the *Returne from Parnassus*, 1606. “ *Kempe*. It is good manners to follow us, *Maister* Philomusus, and *Maister* Otioso.” So also in a Letter written by Queen Elizabeth to Sir Henry Sidney, in 1565, printed from the original at Penshurst, *Sydney Papers*, vol. i. p. 7. “ Let this Memoriall be only committed to Vulcanes base keeping, without any longer abode than the leasure of the reding therof, yea, and with no mention made therof to any other wight. I charge you, as I may comande you, seme not to have had but Secretaries letters from me.

Your lovinge *Maistres*,

ELIZABETH R.”

The elder spelling of this word, *Mastyr*, may be found in the PASTON LETTERS, ii. 292.

in

in *Chamberlayne* is unprecedented. If the Queen had chosen to omit any letter in that word, it would have been the *m*: and *Chamberlain*, not *Chamberlayne*, was, I think, the spelling of that period of her reign: but this is of little consequence. LONDONNE is more material, for no example of such orthography can, I believe, be produced. Even Robert of Gloucester, who flourished in the time of Edward the First, might have taught our forger that LONDON was “lighter in the mouth.”* In 1449, Margaret Paston wrote LONDON. In Aggas’s Map of that city, which appears to have been executed in 1568, we find it written in the same way; and throughout the whole reign of Elizabeth, the Burghley and Sydney Papers shew that there was no variation in the orthography of this word.—The next, and a still more fatal objection lies to *Hamptowne*. Though Hampton-Court, which was given to Henry the Eighth by Cardinal Wolsey in 1526, does not seem to have been so favourite a residence with her Majesty, as Greenwich, Nonesuch, and Richmond, she occasionally

* “*And now me clepeþ it LONDON, þat ys lyghter in þe mouþ.*”

passed

passed some time there, and had probably in the course of her reign signed several hundred state-papers issued from thence, and regularly dated *from the Honour of Hampton-Court*:⁴² yet this learned and accomplished Queen, who was mistress of eight languages,⁴³ is here exhibited as such a dolt as not only not to know the true orthography of a word thus familiar to her, but not to be able to distinguish her palace from the neighbouring town: and to mend the matter, she is made to give to the *town* a termination entirely repugnant to the genius and analogy of the English language, in

⁴² Such was the almost uniform spelling of the time, as far as relates to the first part of this compounded word, which never was separated till the publication of these Papers. See BURGHELY PAPERS, i. 4; *Hampton-Corte*; i. 6, & 574, *Hampton-Court*. SYDNEY PAPERS, i. 86, 354; ii. 311, 312, *Hampton-Coorte*: i. 233, 255; ii. 307, *Hampton-Courte*. i. 272, *Hampton-Courght*. See also Norden's SPECULUM, 1593, p. 26: "*Hampton-Court*, an Honour of Queen Elizabethes, a regall palace, statelie rayseed of bricke. --- It is called Hampton-Court, of the parish of *Hampton*, which standeth not farre thence," &c.

Since the above was written, I have met with one solitary instance of *Hamptown-Court*, written by a clerk, Oct. 14, 1562, [Forbes's STATE PAPERS, ii. 109,] which probably gave rise to the spelling adopted in this forged letter.

⁴³ Florio's FIRST FRUTES, 4to. 1578. Hentzner. ITIN. 4to. 1598.

which the Saxon *ton* is found to form the final syllable of many hundred names of places.

BUT all these MISNOMERS are trivial, compared with her not knowing the true orthography of the name of *Leycester*, for which we have here—*Leycesterre*. Her uniform attachment to that nobleman for the first thirty years of her reign, (excepting some little coldness while he was Governor of the Netherlands,) is so well known, that it makes a part of the scandalous chronicle of those times. Probably, scarce a day passed during that period without her seeing his name written, as he always wrote it, LEYCESTER; and how fairly and legibly he wrote, may be seen by looking on Plate II, where a *fac-simile* of his autograph will be found, from an original in my possession, written on the 30th of June, 1585. The old spelling of this title in the preceding century was not *Leycesterre*, but *Leycestre*; but the nobleman with whom we are concerned uniformly wrote it *Leycester*, as may be seen by looking into the Burghley and Sydney Papers, and other ancient documents. The Queen, it is well known, constantly
attended

attended the sittings of her Privy Council, and took so active a part in what was doing, that we may be sure she perused the Register of each day's proceedings; which she could not look at without the name of Leicester almost constantly presenting itself to her, while he was in England (a list of the Counsellors present each day being always set down); and in addition to all these circumstances, during the last three years of this nobleman's life, the greater part of which he passed in a high station abroad, she must have had innumerable Letters from him.

WITH respect to all the other minute deformities of spelling in this Letter, I shall content myself with merely referring to a curious comparison between her real and fictitious orthography, given below.⁴⁴

I NOW

⁴⁴ In the BURGHLEY PAPERS, i. 102, are two paragraphs written by Elizabeth herself in 1548-9, (and printed from the original,) which have been given in a former page. In the SYDNEY PAPERS, i. 7, is an entire Letter written by her in 1569.—Other specimens will hereafter be given from the Cotton Library and the Heralds-Office. The gross variation in this pretended letter from the Queen's orthography, in several particulars beside those already noticed, will appear at one view from the following table, (for the scheme of which I am indebted to a friend,) which exhibits such words as occur both in these authentick papers,

L

and

2. I NOW come to the LANGUAGE and PHRASEOLOGY.—The first word that occurs worthy of notice is *pretty*,—"Wee did receive

and her spurious Letter. The figure annexed denotes how often the word is repeated.

Spurious Letter.	Examin. Burghley Pap. i. 102.	Letter, Syd. Pap. i. 7.	Letters, Cotton MSS.	Letter to Shrewsbury, MS.
youre	your (4)	your (7)	your	your
goode	—	good (4)	good	—
off	of (3)	of (6)	of	of
ande	and (6)	and (8)	and	—
wee (3)	—	we (3)	—	—
doe	do (2)	do (2)	—	—
onne	—	on	—	—
theyre	—	ther <i>for</i> [their] (4)	—	—
shalle	shall	shall (3)	—	—
fromme	—	from (2)	—	—
toe (2)	to (6)	to (10)	to	—
forre	for	for (2)	—	for (2)
where	—	whare (1) wher (1)	—	—
beste	—	best	—	—
thatte	that (4)	that (8)	—	that
before	—	befor (1)	—	—
oure	—	our (3)	—	—
usse (3)	—	us (1)	—	—
bee	be (4)	be (13)	—	—
butte	but	but (2)	—	—
comme	come	come (3)	—	—
bye	by	by	—	—
asse	as (2)	as (6)	—	—
withe	with	with (4)	—	with
atte	—	at (1)	—	—

your

your *pretty* verses ;” which was not, I think, the language of the time. Shakspeare indeed, and Raleigh, have—*pretty* TALES, which approaches somewhat near to the other ; but both of them use *tale* in the sense of a narrative or entertaining story *related* : and I doubt much whether the epithet *pretty* was then applied to *written* compositions. On this objection, however, I do not much rely ; and here, once for all, I enter my protest against the triumph of those who may produce ancient examples of the usage of certain words to which I object only as *doubtful*. If indeed, where I make a firm stand, and attempt to prove, as far as a negative can be proved, that the word did not exist at that time, I shall be found mistaken, there may be some ground for triumph : but even here, though my critical sagacity or knowledge may be impeached, nothing less than a complete refutation of *all* the verbal objections will be sufficient to establish the authenticity of this or any other of the papers we are now considering : since if out of four objections one only should be found incontrovertible, it will establish the spuriousness of the piece in question as well as four hundred.—I need not employ many

words to shew, that no manuscript alleged to have been written in the age of Queen Elizabeth, can be genuine, in which a single word is found which was not in use till several years, or perhaps an age, after her death.

AFTER acknowledging the receipt of our poet's pretty verses, her Majesty proceeds to *complement* him on their great *excellence*. Now unfortunately no such verb active as to *complement*, in this sense, was known in that age, nor for some time afterwards: and when it did come into use, it was always coupled with a preposition not found here.

To begin with the substantive, *complemente*, for so it was then spelt. Barrett in his ALVEARIE or Quadruple Dictionary, 1580, has it not: but in 1589 we find it used by Puttenham, in a passage already quoted from his ARTE OF POESIE,⁴⁵ and in the sense which the word then universally bore, that of "*completing or filling up.*" In Cawdrey's ALPHABETICAL TABLE of hard words, 8vo. 1604, it is defined "*a perfecting of any thing.*" Bullokar in his ENGLISH EXPOSITOR, 8vo. 1616, brings it a little

⁴⁵ See p. 59.

nearer to its present acceptation, interpreting it—" Fulness ; perfection ; *fine behaviour.*"
 And so our poet himself in his LOVE'S
 LABOUR'S LOST :

" A man of *complements*, whom right and wrong
 " Have chose as umpire of their mutiny."

i. e. a man adorned with all those *accomplishments*, which are " the varnish of a *complete man.*"

AGAIN, in K. HENRY V. where the word has the same sense :

" Garnish'd and deck'd in modest *complement.*"

EVEN in 1611, the French word *compliment* does not seem to have been yet introduced into that language, for Cotgrave, whose dictionary was published in that year, has it not ; and from Howel's republication of that work in 1650, compared with Sherwood's English and French Vocabulary subjoined to it, one might be led to suppose that our present word *compliment* was not borrowed from the French, as Dr. Johnson supposed, but their word from us : for Howel in the French part has it not ; and Sherwood, in whose Vocabulary it appears,
 (spelt—

(spelt—*complement*,) renders it not by the French word *compliment*, but by *entretien*; as he does *complements* by *fressurades*, *ceremonics*. However this may be, Shakspeare himself, after the death of Elizabeth, seems to have used the substantive in one of his late plays [TWELFTH-NIGHT] with the same signification as is now affixed to it; as Sydney had done before him :

“ My servant, Sir ;—’twas never merry world,
 “ Since lowly feigning was call’d *complement*.”

yet even here it may mean *accomplishment*.

IN Edward Philips’s NEW WORLD OF WORDS, which, I think, first appeared in 1659, we have *complement* in its original and secondary sense: “ A filling up; also ceremony in speech and behaviour:” and in Cole’s ENGLISH DICTIONARY, 1685, “ *Complement*; a filling up: also a choice of the best words to express our minds by; and (corruptly) too much ceremony in speech and behaviour.” The same author in his LATIN DICTIONARY, (the early edition of which in 4to. 1679, throws much light on our old language,) has—“ *Complement*, blandimentum, fucus.” But all this
 while

while we find no trace in any writer of the age of Elizabeth, of the *verb active*—"to complement," and therefore, till some instance shall be produced, I have a right to assume that it did not exist. Nor, if it had existed, would it exempt this letter from the charge of forgery; for when it was first used, it was always accompanied by the preposition *with*. Thus in Sherwood's Vocabulary, 1650, "To complement *with*; entretenir;" and in Cole's Latin Dict. 1679, "To complement *with*; *ablandire, blandis et benignis verbis et gestibus excipere.*" Glanvill about this period used the verb without the adjunct *with*, if the quotation from that writer given by Dr. Johnson be correct; and probably he was the first who discarded that appendage. Thus therefore we see that the verb active *to compliment* was so far from being known in the age of Elizabeth, that it was not in use for half a century afterwards; and when it was introduced, it was not employed as it appears in this spurious epistle, but was always accompanied with the adjunct *with*, placed before the person addressed.

ON the *excellence* of Shakspeare's verses,
I have not much to say; but I call upon
1 those

those who may be inclined to maintain the authenticity of this Letter, to produce any example of that word being applied in his age to denote the purity or goodness of written compositions, whether in prose or verse : I know of no such example.

THE next word that demands our attention is *oureselfe*. Those who have the slightest knowledge of English grammar need not be told, that the capricious word *self* is sometimes considered as a substantive, and sometimes as an adjective ; and that when used with the personal pronouns or pronominal adjectives, though joined in construction with them, it was formerly always written separately. In no instance have I ever found in any *manuscript* of the age of Elizabeth the words, *ourself*, *yourself*, &c. written as one word ; though sometimes (but very rarely) such a combination may be found in printed books, either from the compositor's carelessness, or want of room. The uniform mode of writing at that time, and long afterwards, was, *our selfe* ; *your selves* ; &c. This observation alone, without any other aid, would be fatal to the letter before us.

WHEN

WHEN we next find that our poet is ordered by the Queen to attend with his best actors, in order to *amuse* her, what opinion can we entertain of the writer of this Letter, but that he knew no more of the language he endeavoured to imitate, than of the manners and history of the time. The word *amuse*, in its *present sense*, is perfectly modern.—As it certainly came to us from the French, let us first attend to Cotgrave's definition of it in 1611: "*Amuser*. To amuse, to make to *muse* or think of, wonder or gaze at; to put into a dumpe; to stay, hold or delay from going forward by discourse, questions, or any other amusements."—" *Amuse-fol*. One that with vaine pratling or toying holds fond people at gaze."—It is in this instance perfectly unnecessary to turn to Barrett, Cawdrey, Bullokar, Sherwood, Cockeram, or Philips. Coles is the first English Lexicographer, (that I have seen,) who has the word. In his English Dictionary, of which I know not the first edition, (mine is that of 1685,) we find—" To *amuse*, put in a dump;" which in his Latin work, (1679) he renders—" *Detineo, animum in spectaculo occupare.*" In that work he adds—" To

amuse (with words), *aliquem inanibus verbis ducere, trahere, morari, ludificari.*”

THE first writer (that I know of) who has the word even in a kindred sense to that in which it is now used, is the author of THE WHOLE DUTY OF MAN, who in that excellent work entitled THE DECAY OF PIETY, says, “ — they think they see visions, and are arrived at extraordinary revelations, when indeed they do but dream dreams, and *amuse* themselves with the fantastical ideas of a busy imagination.” I have not time to examine the original, though it is close at hand, but quote the passage as given by Dr. Johnson. Yet even here it may mean to *deceive*.—Of the word *amusement*, in its present sense, Rogers, the divine, has furnished that Lexicographer with the first example. Even so late a writer as Kersey, in 1708, gives no other definition of the verb *to amuse*, than—“ to stop or stay one with a trifling story; to feed with vain expectation; to hold in play.”

3. HAVING now done with the LANGUAGE of this letter, I proceed to consider the

the other incongruous circumstances attending it;—the superscription, the negative date, &c. Her Majesty, your lordship will observe, instead of sending this Letter to Master William Shakspeare, by one of her ordinary messengers or grooms of the chamber, or by the proper officer, the Master of the Revels, to honour the poet still more superscribes it herself, not indeed precisely in the fashion of a Letter sent by the modern penny-post, but with the formality of those epistles which in her time were conveyed by common carriers, or state-messengers, from one part of the kingdom to the other: “For Master William Shakspeare atte the Globe bye Thames.” Had she added—“deliver these with speede,”—or “Hast, hast, post hast for thy lif,” it would have been complete. To prevent a possibility of its miscarrying, in her superscription she writes the first letter of the word *For* in that print-like mode which she observed in her sign-manual: and the reason is obvious; the true writer, as you will presently see, had no other archetype before him. But where is this Letter to find the poet?—“at the Globe by Thames.” So that we are to suppose there was no other house or tavern

in London or Southwark, to which the Globe was a sign, but the theatre here intended to be described; and on which side of the Thames it lay, whether north or south, the messenger was to find out as he could; if he did but perambulate *by Thames* long enough, first on one side of the river, and then on the other, he could not fail of stumbling upon it. Unluckily, however, the Globe theatre was not built at the time to which this Letter must be referred; and when it was built, it was not situated *by Thames*, but in Maiden-lane, a street in Southwark at some distance from the river, as is proved by an authentick document in my possession.

IN Aggas's Map of London, which is supposed to have been executed in 1568, and had perhaps an earlier date, there are two buildings in Southwark, one appropriated to *Bolle-baytinge*, the other, which is more to the east, to *Beare-baytinge*, but no theatre is delineated or mentioned: nor is there any found in Virtue's map of London in 1560, or in that by Braun and Hogenbergius, in 1573. The Itinerary of Chytræus, a German, who visited London in 1579, shews that

no such building then existed in Southwark ; for had it existed, he without doubt would have alluded to it, as his countryman Hentzner did about twenty years afterwards :

- “ Opposita in Thamesis ripâ longa area parvis
 “ Distincta aspicitur tectis, ubi magna canum vis
 “ Ursorumque alitur, diversarumque ferarum,
 “ Quæ canibus commissæ Angliæ spectacula præ-
 bent
 “ Hospitibusque novis, vincti dum prælia mis-
 cent,
 “ Luctantes aut ungue fero vel dentibus uncis.
 “ Totius ast urbis quam sit preciosa supellex,
 “ Parietibus quam sint storeæ, pictique tapetes
 “ Inducti egregie, ut juncis herbisque virescant
 “ Strata pavimenta, atque hominum quam mundus
 amictus,
 “ Omnia quid numerare refert ?”⁴⁵

I DO not, however, mean to say that there were no plays exhibited in Southwark at that period, (for I have authentick proofs to the contrary in my possession,) but that there was no regular theatre on the Bankside expressly built for scenick exhibitions. The drama-

⁴⁵ Nath. Chytræi POEMATA, 8vo. 1579. *Iter Angli- cum*, p. 170.

tick performances were at that time either in yards of inns, or in other buildings occasionally employed for that purpose.— In Norden's Map of London in 1593, is found the first delineation of a playhouse in Southwark; but this was not the GLOBE, but the Rose Theatre, which was so denominated from Rose-Alley near which it stood, as the Globe probably derived its name from Globe-Alley. The Rose Theatre, of which the total cost was 103l. 2s. 7d., was built by Mr. Philip Henslowe in 1592, and opened by him in that year, as appears from his theatrical Register now before me. Norden in his Map only calls it *The Playhouse*, its name probably not having then become familiarly known; but that this was the theatre there mentioned, may be deduced from other circumstances. A few weeks before I published the History of the English Stage, I discovered a Contract made the 8th of January 1599-1600, between Philip Henslowe and Edward Alleyn the player, on the one part, and Peter Streete, a carpenter, on the other, for building the Fortune Playhouse near Golding-Lane; which ascertained the dimensions and plan of the Globe theatre, there called “ *the late-erected playhouse*

playhouse on the Bank," &c.⁴⁶ and I have since discovered a Bond executed by Burbadge the player to this very Peter Streete, on the 22d of Dec. 1593, (which has furnished me with the autograph from which the *fac-simile* in Plate II. N^o. xiv. is taken,) for the performance of all the covenants contained "in a certaine paire of Indentures of Articles of agreement, of the date above-mentioned, made between the said Richard Burbadge and Peter Streete." A similar Bond was doubtless executed by this carpenter to Burbadge; and the Articles of Agreement probably related to the building of the Globe Theatre, and were similar to those between Streete and Alleyn, which have been already printed.⁴⁷ This may fix the building of the Globe Theatre to the year 1594, and probably it was opened in that or the following year. Accordingly in the Map of London as it appeared in 1599, we see this theatre. There also, is

⁴⁶ PLAYS and POEMS of WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE, crown 8vo. 1790, Vol. I. P. II. p. 325.

A firm believer in the authenticity of these MSS. contends that these words may very well allude to a playhouse erected *thirty* years before! COMPARATIVE REVIEW, &c. p. 53.

⁴⁷ PLAYS and POEMS of WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE, *ut sup.*

delineated

delineated a small theatre near it, more to the west, to which the modern publisher has not affixed a name: it was the ROSE, which was much smaller than the GLOBE, and had already been noticed by Norden, though without a name, in the Map of 1593. The Rose theatre, which was thatched, and from the price it cost was probably very slight, fell into decay, I imagine about the middle of King James's reign, if not sooner; and there is no trace of it in the Map of London, &c. executed at Venice in 1629.

THUS we see the Globe theatre did not exist at the time to which this letter must be referred; for though the writer cautiously avoided putting a date to it, he has furnished us with a negative date by mentioning Lord Leycester as then living. The Letter therefore must be referred to some period antecedent to Sept. 1588, in the early part of which month that nobleman died.⁴⁸ The

⁴⁸ Burghley's DIARY, in Murden's STATE PAPERS, p. 788.—The *Escaetria*, or Inquisition after the death of Lord Leycester, is not to be found in the Chapel of the Rolls; but it appears from the SYDNEY PAPERS, i. 75, that his Will was proved in Sept. 1588.

greater part of the last three years of his life he spent abroad. On the 8th of December, 1585, with a view to assist the United Provinces, he embarked with a considerable force for Flushing, and on the 25th of the following month he was sworn Governour of the Netherlands. He was almost the whole of the year 1586 abroad. In the October of that year he fought the battle of Zutphen, where unfortunately his nephew, Sir Philip Sydney, lost his life. On the 23d of November following the earl returned to London, at which time the Queen was at Richmond; and he continued in England till the 25th of June 1587, when he went to the Hague, and remained abroad till the latter end of that year. From the time of his return to his death was a period of about nine months, during the whole of which, I believe, he remained at home. This pretended Letter, therefore, if written subsequently to the 8th of December 1585, (and if, after what I have stated and have yet to state, it should find any partisan, I suppose he will not choose to refer it to an earlier period,) must have been written either between the 23d of Nov. 1586, and the 25th of June 1587, or between the

N months

months of December 1587 and Sept. 1588. Now it must also be shewn that the Queen was at Hampton-Court during some part of those two periods. The regular time for the exhibition of plays at Court was Christmas, Twelftide, (as it was called,) Candlemas, and Shrovetide. Accordingly, Shakspeare is very properly called upon to play before the Queen in the *Holydayes*. But I am able to shew, beyond a doubt, that she was not at Hampton-Court during the holydays in either of the periods above mentioned.

FORMERLY, as is well known, the great officers of state removed with the Sovereign from palace to palace, and were accommodated with no very convenient apartments wherever the Court happened to reside.⁴⁹

Hence

⁴⁹ The following Letter written by the eldest daughter of John Duke of Northumberland, Lady Mary, the wife of Sir Henry and mother of Sir Philip Sydney, furnishes us with a curious view of the inconveniencies suffered on these occasions. It also affords a specimen of the orthography of a woman of high rank, at the period when it was written, which, though inaccurate enough, (as the orthography of ladies continued to be till the present century,) has no kind of resemblance to the fantastical mis-spelling attributed to Queen Elizabeth, Lord Southampton, &c. The words in Italicks are particularly worthy of attention.

To

Hence it is that we find so many old Letters dated *from the Court*; that is, from the apartments

[To Edmund Mollineux, Esq.]

“ Molenex,

“ I thought *good* to put you in remembrance to moue my Lord CHAMBERLEIN, [Thomas Ratcliffe, earl of Sussex,] in my Lord's name,* to haue some other roome then my chamber, *for* my Lord to haue his resort unto, *as* he was wont to haue; or ells my Lord wilbe greatly trubled, when he shall haue enny maters of dispache: my lodginge, you see, beinge very lytle, *and* my sealfe continewaly syke, *and* not able to be mouche out of my bed. For the night tyme, on [one] roofe, with Gods grace, shall serue *vs*: *for* the day tyme the Quen will louke to haue my chamber always in a redines for her Majesties cominge thether; *and* thoghe my Lord him sealfe cann be no impediment thearto by his owen presens, yet his Lordshipe, trustinge to no playce ells to be provyded *for* him, wilbe, as I sayd before, trubled *for* want of a conuenient playce, *for* the dispache of souche people *as* shall haue occasion to come to him. Therefore I pray you, in my Lords owen name, moue my Lord of Sussex for a room for that purpose, and I will haue it hanged and lyned *for* him, with stoof from hens. I wish you not to be unmyndfull hearof; and so for this tyme I leue you to the Almyghty. From Chiswicke, this xi of october, 1578.

Your very assured louing

Mistris and Frend,

M. Sydney.”

The officers to whom the arrangement of the apartments belonged, were on these occasions often put to great diffi-

* Sir Henry Sydney was Lord President of Wales.

apartments of the Lord Treasurer or other great officer of state, where the Court then happened to be. The Privy Council in the time of Elizabeth consisted of a very small number, (not more than ten or twelve persons,) and their meetings, which were, I think, daily, were almost always held in whatever palace the Queen then inhabited. Hence the Registers of the Council ascertain the residence of the Queen. Now it appears from the Council-books that her Majesty spent the Christmas of the year 1586, at her favourite palace of Greenwich, and continued there till May 1587, when she went to Nonesuch; from which she returned in June to Greenwich, where she continued the whole of that month, on the 25th of which Leycester left England.—

culties. In 1574, when preparations were made at Archbishop Parker's palace at Croydon for the reception of the Queen and her Court, Mr. Bowyer, Gentleman-Usher of the black rod, writes,—“ if my lady of Oxford should come, I cannot then tell wher to place Mr. Hatton; and for my Lady Carewe, here is no place with a chimney for her, but she must lay abrode by Mrs. Apparry and the rest of the Privye Chamber: for Mrs. Skelton there is no rome with chimneys. - - Here is as mytche as I have any wayes able to doo in this house.”—From a MS. in the Library at Lambeth. LYSONS'S ENVIRONS OF LONDON, i. 174.

So much for the first of the two periods which I have mentioned. Let us now see whether the second period will be more favourable to the *amusement* of her Majesty and her favourite. From the beginning of December 1587, to the 8th day of July 1588, she resided at Greenwich. On that day she went to Richmond, where she remained to the end of July. She then removed to St. James's, where she resided, making the most vigorous preparations against a second Spanish invasion, to the end of Sept. 1588; during which time the only excursion she made was to the Camp at Tilbury, (August 9th.)* when she pronounced that celebrated harangue recorded by all our historians. In neither of these periods does her Majesty appear ever to have been at Hampton-Court.

OUR great poet, your Lordship observes, is here addressed not as a novice or pro-

* It has been suggested (COMPARATIVE REVIEW, &c. p. 52,) that Shakspeare might have been summoned to play before the Queen soon afterwards. The suggester, I suppose, is possessed of an OXFORD Almanack for 1588, from which it appears that at least *Shrove-Tuesday* in that year, or perhaps the entire Christmas Holydays, were removed by authority to the month of *August*.

bationer on the stage, but an established actor; nay, as the manager and leader of a troop of actors. He was born, we all know, in April 1564. At what time precisely he came to London, though I have not been negligent in my inquiries, I have not been able to ascertain; but I have shewn in the Life of this poet, from an enumeration of various circumstances, that his first excursion to the metropolis could not well have been before the year 1586 or 1587; and that he had a natural and easy access to the theatre, without any introduction from either Hathwaye the poet, who was perhaps his wife's kinsman, or Thomas Greene the actor, who may have been his countryman; a conjecture which I found rather on his name, than the suspicious and insecure testimony of Chetwood.⁵⁰—In the History of the Stage I have been more successful; and that History, when again presented to the publick, while it will exhibit its actual state and the dramattick perform-

⁵⁰ Chetwood, who had been prompter at Drury-Lane, quotes four lines from an old comedy in which Greene is spoken of as a native of Stratford; but no such lines are to be found in the piece. This man, as we shall see hereafter, was a very notable forger.

ances from the year 1570 to about the year 1586, will prove from unquestionable documents, that it is in the highest degree improbable that Shakspeare should have produced a single drama till some time after that period.

IT is quite unnecessary here to enter into the particular circumstances on which this opinion is founded. Had he been at the head of a Company of Actors in 1587 or 1588, we cannot suppose him to have attained to so high a rank in less than five or six years; during which time he could not fail to have produced some of his incomparable pieces. But he is not mentioned by Nashe in his Epistle to the two Universities, prefixed to Greene's *MENAPHON*, 1589, (afterwards republished under the title of *ARCADIA*,) in which he reviews the celebrated poets of the time, and particularly praises George Peele, whom he calls the *Atlas* of Poetry, and *primus verborum artifex*, for his drama entitled *THE ARRAIGNMENT OF PARIS*; and Puttenham, whose *ARTE OF POESY* appeared in the same year, though one of the Gentlemen Pensioners, and therefore constantly near the Queen,

Queen, had never heard of this established and eminent *Coriphæus* of the Stage, though her Majesty's honouring him a year or two before with a Letter written by her own hand must necessarily have made some little noise at Court: for having occasion to speak of the dramatick poets of the time, he tells us—"that for tragedie, [under which was included any doleful poem,] the Lord of Buckhurst and Maister Edward Ferrys, for such doings as I haue sene of theirs, do deserue the hiest price; th' Earle of Oxford and Maister Edwardes of her Majesties chappell for comedy and enterlude."

SINCE these papers have been committed to the press, a pamphlet has been put into my hands, in which we are told that "within these few days a deed has been discovered that will put *this matter beyond all question*, [namely, that Shakspeare was at the head of a company of actors in or before 1588,] and which will in *due time* be laid before the publick at large."⁵¹ Can your lordship help smiling at this second

⁵¹ *Comparative Review of the Opinions of Mr. James Boaden, &c.* p. 51, 8vo. 1796.

part of the Chattertonian fiction? Whenever the supporters of that fiction found themselves hard pressed, they appealed to the *Green* or *Yellow Roll* given by that extraordinary youth to Mr. Barrett. I make no doubt this new deed will settle this point completely, and that it is just *as authentick* as those which I shall presently have occasion to examine.

BEFORE I come to that which I have reserved for the last and fatal objection to the spurious composition before us, I must just notice the minute annexed to it: "Thys Letterre I didde receyve fromme mye moste gracyouse Ladye Elizabeth," &c. Here we have the modest and careless Shakespeare, who flung his writings to the world unconscious of their excellence, and negligent of their fate, sedulously docketing his papers with the punctilious exactness of a merchant or attorney.

I MAY also observe, that it is remarkable the poet should here take such care that this gracious Epistle should be "kept with all care possyble," and yet should not have preserved the *pretty verses* that gave occasion to

it. We shall presently be informed that he kept a copy of his letter to Lord Southampton; and why he should not have been as careful of his poetry as of his prose, it will not, I conceive, be very easy to assign an adequate reason.—If these “pretty verses” had been presented to her Majesty, she assuredly would not “commit to Vulcan’s base keeping” a poetical encomium which was more likely to immortalize her charms, and to make them for ever bloom in song, than all the flattery of all her courtiers. How then came it to pass that they never got abroad? that no Lady Willoughby stole them from among her papers? that none of our poet’s brethren of the stage should have got a copy of lines which had brought such honour to one of their fellows?—It is much to be lamented that these questions were not put in time; as without doubt they would have induced the unknown gentleman in the county of ——, who possesses all these treasures, to have made a more diligent search than has yet been made for these encomiastick verses, and very probably they might have been found either between the leaves of one of the
the

the twenty thousand volumes⁵² of Shakspeare's library, which he is said to possess, or in one of the smaller pockets of that *greene sloppd suyte of velvette*, which, as your Lordship will presently find, this poet intended for Master Rice, the actor; but the person in whom Shakspeare confided having basely broken his trust, poor Rice was defrauded of it, and it is yet, I am told, in fine preservation, and as fresh as when it was first made, lying in the unknown repository, in that great chest with six locks, which contains all the rest of the wardrobe belonging to Shakspeare and the Globe Theatre.⁵³

I HAVE

⁵² Some have gone so far as to say that this library vies with that of the celebrated Mr. Lackington, and consists of one hundred thousand volumes;—but this must be a mistake.

⁵³ Since I wrote the above, on my mentioning this subject to a friend, he told me he had the good fortune to obtain a copy of Shakspeare's PRETTY VERSES to the Queen, which were given to him by a Gentleman who was intimately acquainted with the possessor of these treasures, and had no doubt of their authenticity: though he could not pretend to say whether they were to appear in the second or third folio volume of these reliques, which have been promised to the publick.—As to many persons these lines will undoubtedly appear a great curiosity, I shall give them

I HAVE but one word more to add on the subject of the facts mentioned in this epistle.

them a place here. It would not become me to say whether they are entitled to the character given of them by our maiden Queen.—*Valeant quantum valere possunt.*

“ To Her HIGHNESS the QUEENES MAJESTIE, from the lowest of her Servants, WILLIAM SHAKSPERE.

“ QUEENE of my thoughts by daye, my dreame by night,

“ My gracious Mistress still is in my sight.

“ Her full perfections how shall I displaye ?

“ No words the bright IDEA can pourtraye :

“ To paint her right, would neede her own sweete lays ;

“ None but ELIZA should ELIZA praise.—

“ By you selected from the mimick band,

“ So grac'd, so honour'd, by your high command,

“ Such was the gratitude that thrill'd my heart,

“ My trembling fingers could not play their parte ;

“ In vain my faithless lyre I try'd to sound,

“ Mute were the strings and unresponsive found.—

“ So when some lowly swain essayes to prove

“ His humble duty and obsequious love,

“ The practised accents in his throat are lost,

“ And his best purpose by his virtue crost.—

“ Lo, THE DUMB BARD ! the spangled courtier eries,

“ And round me speechless, all St. James's flies ;

“ Each titled dame deserts her rolls and tea,

“ And all the Maids of Honour crye—Te ! He !—

“ From the gay tittering throng dismay'd I fled,

“ Nor knowe I where to hide my wretched head.”

In the original there is a Note, mentioning that this unfortunate miscarriage happened to our poet at a *Breakfast* given

epistle. Whence is it, that the Lord Chamberlain is introduced here as the person

given by the Queen to a select number of Courtiers of both sexes ; among whom were Lord and Lady Essex, Lord Southampton and the fair Mrs. Vernon, Sir Walter Raleigh, Lord and Lady Hunsdon, Mr. John Harrington, the fair Mistress Bridges, Sir Thomas Heneage, Sir Francis and Lady Knollys, Lord and Lady Howard, Lady Rich, Lord Mountjoy, the Lord Marquis, and many more.

If the simile—" So when a lowly swain," should be said to smell too strongly of one of our poet's plays, and to be faulty in another respect, as being little more than a comparison of a thing with itself, the answer, I suppose, would be, that Shakspeare, when he wrote these lines, had probably recently composed his MIDSUMMER'S NIGHT'S DREAM ; and as to the other point, that Addison's celebrated simile of *the Angel* was equally faulty ; neither was the time of Elizabeth an age of such nicety of criticism as the present.

On my objecting to the word *idea* in the fourth line, my friend told me, he had himself made the same objection to the gentleman who had communicated these verses ; on which he said he had made a mistake, and that he had a *better copy* at home, without that word : but as I would not venture to alter any thing that even pretended to be the composition of our immortal bard, I have adhered to the first copy. My friend scrupled a little at the mention of *St. James's*, but there he was certainly in an error ; for Queen Elizabeth sometimes resided at that palace.—The last line but two, is more difficult to be got over ; but those who may think these verses genuine, may *very consistently* maintain either that Shakspeare foresaw in this, as in many other instances which might be produced from the MIS-

son through whom these verses reached her Majesty? No doubt, because the writer

CELLANEOUS PAPERS, what would be written in the eighteenth century, or, (which is full as probable,) that the ingenious author of the Epistle to Sir William Chambers had a peep some years ago at this curious relique in the dark repository where it has been preserved, and stole from it one of his best lines.

Other objections were made by my friend to the omission of the good chine and surloin and manchet of Queen Elizabeth's days, and introducing our fragrant Chinese beverage, with its proper accompaniment, in their room; and also to the allusion to Balloons and the Earthquake at Lisbon, in a subsequent part of these verses, which he had heard, though he had not obtained a copy of them: but the *good Believer* told him, that a Committee having been appointed to consider of these matters, (consisting of Messrs. B, C, D, E, O, P, Q, and R,) these objections were over-ruled, and unanimously voted of no weight whatsoever.

The Committee observed, in support of their opinion, that plays having been formerly performed at the Globe Theatre ten or twelve times every season by COMMAND of Queen Elizabeth, as they are at present at our modern theatres by Command of their Majesties, (which was clearly proved by a deed that would very soon be *brought forward*,) the covert allusion to this circumstance in the eighth line, as well as our author's so happily introducing the terms of his own profession in a subsequent couplet, (which his Editors had pointed out as a frequent practice of his,) stamped these verses with Shakspeare's own seal, and were equal to a thousand witnesses.

conceived that this was the proper channel at the present day:—but had Shakspeare ever addressed his gracious mistress in verse, Mr. Tylney the Master of the Revels, and Sir Thomas Heneage the Treasurer of the Chamber, being the persons from whom the actors of that time received the royal mandates and the royal bounties, one or other of those persons would unquestionably have been entreated to present this tender of his duty to her Majesty.

4. MY last topick is, I will not say the dissimilitude, but the total and entire dissimilitude of every part of the hand-writing of this letter (except the signature) from Elizabeth's genuine hand-writing.—As the name *Elizabeth* is an adumbration of her hand-writing, (though a most imperfect one,) and this forgery may be clearly proved without deriving any aid from thence, I might now immediately proceed to examine the writing of the letter itself: but as I have been informed that a deservedly eminent barrister, whose great practice makes him peculiarly conversant with the laws of evidence, has given some kind of sanction to these spurious papers, I shall, for the sake
of

of my brethren of the bar, expend a little time on this supposed autograph ; that they may not be induced by so high an authority, on similar occasions, and in matters which to the generality of the world will appear of more importance than the question before us, ever to hazard an opinion without a minute comparison of the pretended and real originals.—In the name which has been exhibited as the hand-writing of the Queen, there are no less than six gross errors. The first is, that it is too small for the period to which it must be referred. Sir William Musgrave obligingly furnished me with five autographs of her Majesty, two written in the first, the rest in the fifth, tenth, and fifteenth years of her reign. I am myself possessed of one written in her twenty eighth year ; and in the *fac-simile* plate, annexed, two others will be found. From these, and others which I have examined, it appears that her hand-writing gradually enlarged as she advanced in life ; and that in the year 1587 or 1588, it was at least a fourth, perhaps a third, larger than her writing when she came to the throne. And though there may have been some slight variation in her hand-writing in the same or nearly the same period,

period, as there is between N^o. II. and N^o. III. on the *fac-simile* plate, (written at no great distance of time from each other,) yet even the smallest of these is considerably larger than what we are now examining.

THE second error is, that the pretended autograph inclines sideways;* whereas her genuine autographs are *bolt-upright*.

IN the print-like hand which she adopted for her sign-manual, she contrived the intricate flourish which she always placed under the first letter, so as to supply the lower stroke, and to render the letter perfect and entire: but in her pretended autograph this not being done, we find an F instead of an E. This is the third deviation.

THE fourth is in the letter a. In the early part of her reign she formed the direct stroke of that letter like other persons: but by degrees it became higher than the circular part: it never, however, reached to such a height as in the spurious autograph, nor was it ever open or looped at top: nor ever so disjoined as to appear, as it here does, like an *l*.

* See Plate I. N^o. I.

IN all her autographs the *b* is closed at bottom either by being so formed, or by the flourish under it. Here it is open at bottom; this is the fifth deviation: and the sixth is, that the R is not connected with the other letters by a line passing through the *b*.—Such is that *perfect* and *unquestionable* autograph, which satisfied such numerous examiners, many of whom are said to have declared that they had seen several autographs of Queen Elizabeth, and that they were as perfectly convinced of its genuineness, as they should have been if they had seen her Majesty write it.

IT is manifest that the fabricator of these papers either was possessed of one of the many autographs of this Queen which are extant, or relied upon a *fac-simile* of it in a book which he was likely to examine for other purposes, (the ANTIQUARIAN REPERTORY,) though he has made so miserable and imperfect an imitation of his archetype; but having no archetype whatsoever of her running or secretary hand, as it is called, he invented as well as he could; sometimes keeping that autograph in his eye, and sometimes deviating from it, just

as caprice dictated. The genuine and spurious Alphabet which is given in Plate I. will shew at once that he had never seen any of her ordinary hand-writing. When she was little more than sixteen years old, her Master, Ascham, highly praises her for her caligraphy; ⁵⁴ and from that time to a very late period of her life, a fairer, a more

⁵⁴ “ Si quid Græce Latineve scribat, manu ejus nihil pulchrius.” Ascham. EPISTOL. lib. i. p. 21. edit. 1703.

“ There are two original letters of hers [the Lady Elizabeth] yet remaining, (says Burnet,) writ to the Queen when she was with child of King Edward, the one in Italian, the other in English, both writ *in a fair hand, the same that she wrote all the rest of her life.* But the conceits in that writ in English are so pretty, that it will not be unacceptable to the reader, to see this first blossome of so great a princess, when she was not full four years of age: she being born in September 1533, and this writ in July 1537.” HIST. OF THE REFORM, vol. i. p. 209.

Burnet subjoins the letter, and does not seem to have once reflected that it might be the composition of another person. It was, without doubt, dictated to her by her governess, or some other person near her. Did ever any child of four years old compose such a sentence as this?—
“ I much rejoyce in your health, with the well liking of the country; with my humble thanks that your Grace wished me with you till I were weary of that countrey. Your highness were like to be combered, if I should not depart till I were weary being with you: *although it were in the worst soil in the world, your presence would make it pleasant.*”

beautiful, or more uniform hand-writing than her's will not be found in any of the papers of that age. It very strongly resembles, as has been suggested to me, the very elegant hand-writing of the celebrated Dr. Dee, who occasionally addressed letters to her Majesty, which are still extant.

IN Plate I., I have contrasted part of the spurious Letter which has been now examined, with two genuine specimens of Elizabeth's hand-writing. That marked N^o. II. is the conclusion of a Letter addressed to the King of Scotland, and dated the 26th of April, 1584. It is among the Cotton MSS. in the British Museum; CALIGULA, C. ix. p. 107. No part of the letter but the conclusion and the signature, ("Your best wisching Cousin and truly Affectionated Sistar, Elizabeth R.") is in her hand-writing. The other specimen, which, as well as the former, was pointed out to me by the Rev. Mr. Ayscough of the Museum, is still more valuable and curious; because it furnishes us with a trait of manners, and a proof of that condescending familiarity by which she won the hearts of her people. It is taken from an imperfect
paper,

paper, of which the address, whether superscribed or subjoined, is lost ; this fragment being pasted on a leaf in one of the volumes of the Cotton MSS. VESPASIAN, F. 3. p. 13. b. It is highly probable, as Mr. Planta of the Museum suggests to me, that it was addressed to Sir Henry Wallop, one of the ancestors of the present earl of Portsmouth, and a very distinguished character in that age. At the time her Majesty appears to have honoured him with this testimony of her regard, he was Vice-treasurer and Treasurer at War in Ireland, and one of the Lords Justices of that kingdom, to which last high station he was advanced on the sixth of the preceding September, 1582, on the recall of Spencer's patron, the Lord Deputy Arthur Lord Grey. Sir Henry coming to England in 1591, he was in that year honoured with a royal visit at his seat at Farley Wallop, where her Majesty and her attendants were entertained for some days. He afterwards returned to Ireland, where he died April 14, 1599.

“ Elizabeth R.

“ TRUSTIE and right welbeloved, we
greet

greet you well. having had so long experience of yo^r good service done to us in that place where you are, and nowe of late especially by yo^r carefull and diligent observation of the affaires not only of that realme where you remaine as o^r Leiger, but of the occurrents from other Contries, w^{ch} as matters greatly importing o^r State here at home, and lykewise ou^r affaires abroad with other princes, you do alwaie both tymely and at large advertise hither: we cannot but greatly allowe and comēd this yo^r faithful service, and therefore for yo^r better encouragement to hould on this course in the same we thought it convenient by this o^r owne Ire to signifie o^r good acceptation therof. We may not likewise forgett to yeld you thanks for sondrie presents you have heretofore sent unto us, and namely for yo^r late newe yeares gifte. Last of all, towching yo^r private sute unto us, we will have the same in such good remembrance as shall bee you shall hereafter see to yo^r comfort. Given under o^r signett at o^r Mano^r of Richmond the xxiiijth of February in the xxvth yere of o^r raigne [1582-3].”

THERE being a void space at the top of
this

NPL.

Part of Q. Elizabeth's
Spurious Letter.

See Miscellaneous Pieces, p. 4.

Alce didad ree doos spoure pittifully
good Western shall am through the hands
off our Lord's hands chafed and over doo
comp~~te~~ment the ome's by your grates sp~~ill~~ment &c.

Elizabeth

Her genuine
Alphabet.

a b c d e f f g h i k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z

N^o. II.

MSS. Cotton.
Codigula C. IX. p. 107.

Your base wylings
Affectionated
Elizabeth

N^o. III.

Vespasian
E. 3. p. 13. b.

I thank you good Larry for soe of her
Services than Comen Comissios for wiche
in fraile of other M^oments I fault
not to looke in my best Memorie

Elizabeth

Elizabeth

my sic and myght welloboned we gatt you well. &c.

Longmate f.

this paper, her Majesty, probably after she had affixed her sign-manual to it, was pleased with her own hand to write as follows :

“ I thāke you good Harry for sōe other Services than Comen Comissiōs for wiche in skroile of other Memorielz I faile not to Locke in my best Memorye.”⁵⁵

IN comparing these genuine specimens of Elizabeth's hand-writing with the spurious trash on the same plate, (No. I.) copied faithfully from the late publication, no magnifying glasses or other aids are requisite : it is only necessary for any person, however unconvertant with ancient manuscripts, to cast his eye on the *fac-similes* annexed, to be convinced that the pretended Letter of Queen Elizabeth to Shakspeare is a manifest and bungling forgery.⁵⁶

ANOTHER

⁵⁵ See Plate I. N^o. III.

⁵⁶ That he that runs may read, and that this forgery may be at once made evident even to those least conversant with such subjects, on the same plate is given an Alphabet taken from her spurious Epistle, exhibiting correctly such of the twenty-four letters as are there found ; contrasted with

ANOTHER specimen of this Queen's hand-writing, in the College of Herald's, has been lately pointed out to me, which, if I had known of it in time, should also have been given on the *fac-simile* plate. I shall however, for the sake of the orthography, insert here the few sentences of which it consists, which are written in the same elegant hand as all her other writing. They are subjoined to a letter addressed to the earl of Shrewsbury, (who had then Mary Queen of Scots in his custody,) dated at the " Castle of Windsor, the xxiith of October, 1572," to relieve him from the apprehension which he had entertained that her Majesty had suffered by the small-pox, from which disease Camden says she was then newly recovered :

“ MY faithfull Shrewesbury let no grief touche your harte for feare of my disease for I Assure you if my Creadit wer not greatar than my shewe ther is no beholdar

with her genuine alphabet, copied from the two specimens N^o. II. and III., except only the letters *p*, *q*, and *x*, for which the engraver was obliged to have recourse to another MS. in the Museum.

wold

would beleve that ever I had bin touched
with suche a Maladye

Your faitheful loving

Soveraine

Elizabeth R.⁵⁶

HAVING lately met with two other short
Letters from this Queen to two ladies of her
court, I shall subjoin them, for the sake of
the spelling and phraseology :

[TO LADY DRURY upon the death of
her husband.]⁵⁷

“BEE well ware my Besse you strive
not with divine ordinaunce nor grudge at
irremediable harmes leste you offend the

⁵⁶ From the original MS. in the Heralds-Office; SHREWS-
BURY PAPERS, (in several volumes) vol. i. p. 41. This,
and the letter accompanying it, have been printed by Mr.
Lodge.

⁵⁷ Nicholls's PROGRESSES of QUEEN ELIZABETH,
Vol. II. p. 36. F 2. b. Mr. Nicholls cannot recollect from
whence he copied this Letter, but believes he found it in
the Museum.

Sir William Drury, who had been Lord President of
Munster in 1575, was appointed Chief Governor of Ire-
land in April 1578, and died at Waterford in October,
1579. He was a great favourite of Queen Elizabeth, who
honoured him by standing God-mother to one of his chil-
dren. I suppose the lady here addressed was his widow.

Q

highest

highest Lord and no whitte amend the
 married hap Heape not your harmes
 where helpe ther is none, but since you
 may not that you would wish that you can
 enjoye with comferte, a king for his power
 and a queene for her love, who loves
 [leaves]⁵⁸ not now to protect you when your
 case requires care and minds not to omitte
 what ever may be best for you and yours.

Your most loving careful sovraine
 E. R.”

[TO LADY PAGET.]

“ A Memoriall. / Elizabeth R.

“ CĀL to your mynde good Kate how
 hardly we princes cā broke a crossing of our
 comādes How yreful wyl the hiest power
 be may you be sure whā murmure shal be
 made of his pleasing wyl. / Let Nature
 therfor not hurt your selfe but give place to
 the Givur And though this lessō be frō a sely
 vikar yet is hit sent frō a Lovinge Souve-
 raine.”⁵⁹

IN

⁵⁸ *Loves*, must, I think, have been an error of the original transcriber.

⁵⁹ BRIT. MUS. MSS. Birch. 4160—23. Dr. Birch's copy has this title: “ Queen Eliz. to Lady Paget on the death of her daughter Lady Crompton, mother to Lady Lyttelton, wife of Sir Thomas Lyttelton. Orig. at Hagley.”

Lady

IN both these Letters, as well as in those to Sir Henry Sydney, Lord Shrewsbury, and Sir Henry Wallop, every reader must be struck by the quaintness of the expression, (the quaintness of the age,) tinged with good sense, for which we look in vain in the pretended Letter to Shakspeare.

BEFORE I dismiss this epistle, I ought not to pass over without remark the manner in which this and the other pieces in this volume have been published, without the slightest notice of the water-mark on each paper. In the smaller pieces, at least, one might have expected that the example of the late Sir John Fenn in the curious publication of the Paston Letters, would have been followed, and that the several paper-marks in these reliques should have been given; whether the *tankard* of Master

Lady Lyttleton's mother, however, the wife of Sir Thomas Crompton of Driffeld in Yorkshire, is said by Collins to have been Muriel, the daughter of David Carey, Esq. The daughter of Catharine Lady Paget (the wife of Henry Lord Paget who died in 1568,) was married to Sir Henry Lee, Knight.—I suspect this Letter was addressed to a Lady Carey.

Some deficiencies in Dr. Birch's transcript have been now supplied, and some errors corrected, from another and more accurate copy.

Richarde *Jugge* the Stationer, or any other, might present itself to the prying view of the Antiquary. Of this, however, I shall have occasion to say more hereafter.

II. EXTRACTS FROM MISCELLANEOUS PAPERS.

III. A NOTE OF HAND, AND A RECEIPT.

THE four following pieces are so replete with absurdity and incongruity, that it is scarce worth while to examine them: but being very short, they will soon be dispatched. The first of them is as follows:

“ Inne the yeare o Christ

[*hiatus valde deflendus*]

“ FORRE oure Trouble inne goynge toe Playe before the Lorde Leycesterre ats house and oure greate Expenneces there-uponne 19 poundes.

RECEYVEDDE ofs Grace the Summe o 50 Poundes.

W^m. Shakspeare.”

As this is the first paper which is pretended to be in our poet's hand-writing, it is necessary to enter into a minute detail respecting the spelling of his name; Mr.

Steevens and myself having most innocently led the fabricator of all these novelties into a lamentable error, which alone, without any other consideration, would prove beyond a doubt the forgery of the whole heterogeneous mass.

IN the year 1776 Mr. Steevens, in my presence, traced with the utmost accuracy the three signatures affixed by the poet to his Will. While two of these [N^o. xi. and xii. in Plate II.] manifestly appeared to us *Shakspeare*, we conceived that in the third [N^o. xiii.] there was a variation; and that in the second syllable an *a* was found. Accordingly we have constantly so exhibited the poet's name ever since that time. It ought certainly to have struck us as a very extraordinary circumstance, that a man should write his name twice one way, and once another, on the same paper: however it did not; and I had no suspicion of our mistake, till, about three years ago, I received a very sensible letter from an anonymous correspondent,⁶⁹ who shewed me very clearly

⁶⁹ At the same time that I return my thanks to this correspondent, (to whom I wish to be personally known,) I beg

clearly that, though there was a superfluous stroke when the poet came to write the letter *r* in his last signature,* probably from the tremor of his hand, there was no *a* discoverable in that syllable; and that this name, like both the other, was written *Shakspere*. Revolving this matter in my mind, it occurred to me that in the new *fac-simile* of his name which I gave in 1790, my engraver had made a mistake in placing an *a* over the name

which was there exhibited *Shaksp^ae*, and

that what was supposed to be that letter was only a mark of abbreviation, with a turn or curl at the first part of it, which gave it the appearance of a letter. I resolved therefore once more to examine the original, before I published any future edition of his works; and (it being very

beg leave to inform him, that I had myself corrected the error into which I had fallen relative to Shakspeare's second daughter Judith Queeny, [PLAYS AND POEMS OF WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE, Vol. I. P. I. p. 175, n. 3.] and on the very ground he mentions; as he will find by turning to Vol. I. P. II. p. 158. She was, without doubt, married to Thomas Queeny with her father's *knowledge*, though probably without his *approbation*.

* See Plate II. N^o. xiii.

material in the present inquiry) to take this opportunity of ascertaining my own error, if any error there was.

ON the 10th of March 1612-13, Shakspeare purchased from one Henry Walker a small estate in Blackfriars, for one hundred and forty pounds, eighty of which he appears to have paid down; and he mortgaged the premises for the remainder. In the year 1768 the mortgage-deed, which was dated the 11th of March, but without doubt executed on the same day as the deed of bargain and sale, (like our modern conveyance of Lease and Release,) was found by Mr. Albany Wallis, among the title-deeds of the Rev. Mr. Fetherstonhaugh of Oxted in the county of Surrey, and was presented by him to the late Mr. Garrick. From that deed the *fac-simile* above mentioned was made. As I have not the pleasure of being acquainted with Mrs. Garrick, to whom I was indebted on that occasion, Lord Orford, (since I began this Letter,) very obligingly requested her to furnish me once more with the deed to which our poet's autograph is affixed: but that lady, after a very careful search, was
not

not able to find it, it having by some means or other been either mislaid or stolen from her. On the same day on which I received this account, I called upon Mr. Wallis, with whom I am acquainted, and to whom the deeds of Mr. Fetherstonhaugh, after having been a long time out of his hands, have been lately restored: among them he luckily met with the counterpart of the original deed of bargain and sale, made on the 10th of March 1612-13, which furnished me with our poet's name, and fully confirmed my conjecture; for there the mark of abbreviation appears at top nearly such as I expected I should find it in Mrs. Garrick's deed, and the poet having had room to write an *r*, though on the very edge of the label, his own orthography of his name is ascertained, beyond a possibility of doubt, to have been SHAKSPERE. Mr. Wallis having obligingly permitted me to make use of this new autograph of our poet, (which has the additional advantage of having his christian name at length,) a *fac-simile* of it will be found in Plate II. N^o. x. Notwithstanding this authority, I shall still continue to write our poet's name SHAKSPEARE, for reasons which

which I have assigned in his Life. But whether in doing so I am right or wrong, it is manifest that he wrote it himself SHAKSPERE; and therefore if any original Letter or other MS. of his shall ever be discovered, his name will appear in that form. The necessary consequence is, that these papers, in which a different orthography is almost uniformly found, cannot but be a forgery.

YOUR Lordship sees, that if Mr. Steevens and I had maliciously intended to lay a trap for this fabricator to fall into, we could not have done the business more adroitly. But you will readily acquit us of any such intention.—This, however, was not the only error into which he has been led. When I had resolved to give, in my edition, our poet's name on the *fac-simile* plate, at length, (to shew how it would have appeared had it been so written, and on paper, instead of parchment,) the Engraver desired me to furnish him with an archetype for one of the concluding letters; the letter *r*. Inadvertently I took down a MS. of the time, which happened to be near at hand, and pointed out to him a German *r*, (much

R

used

used by Scriveners in the time of Elizabeth and James,) for which, the printing-house not being furnished with such a type, I must refer you to Plate II. where it is placed close to N^o. x. with a view to the present reference. The correspondent above-mentioned very justly observed, that I was here also inaccurate; for Shakspeare having thrice in his Will used a different kind of *r*, (such as is frequently used at this day,) and no other specimens of his hand-writing, containing that letter, being then extant, there was no ground for supposing that he had ever employed the German *r*.—Our fabricator, however, has here also followed me implicitly; and as he conceived that the poet had in his Will written his name twice *Shaksperc*, and once *Shakspeare*, he resolved to supply us with equal variations: in his modern-antique papers therefore we have the name exhibited in both ways; and that no kind of variety might be wanting, we have one pretended signature with the chancery-hand *r*,⁶¹ another with this same German *r*,⁶² of which I have been obliged

⁶¹ See the pretended Letter “to Masterre Richard Cowley,” in MISCELLANEOUS PAPERS, &c.

⁶² See the pretended Letter to Lord Southampton, Pl. II. N^o. ix. to

to give so long a history, and one without any *r* at all.⁶³ This canine letter, indeed, seems to have particularly engaged his attention, and to have been particularly fatal to him; for finding in the Paston Letters, and in Forbes's Collections, (to both of which, if I mistake not, he has been indebted,) that some persons in ancient times used what is called the Chancery-hand *r*,⁶⁴ he thought it would give an antique air to these wonderful discoveries: and therefore in almost all Shakspeare's pretended writing, and in one of his autographs, he has made him employ a letter which is intended to represent this kind of *r*, but is no more like it than the first letter of the alphabet is to the last.⁶⁵ The use of this letter was entirely dis-
continued

⁶³ See the Signature to the "Tributary Lines to Ireland." MISCELLANEOUS PAPERS, p. 50, counting from the first; for the book is not paged.

⁶⁴ See it in Plate II. N^o. X. next to the German *r* already mentioned.

⁶⁵ The reader is desired to cast his eye on the word *Leycesterre* in N^o. VII. Plate II. and also a little below on the true Chancery-hand (*r*), near the edge of the plate under N^o. X. But why, it will be said, could he not imitate this letter exactly? Why should he give what looks more like a *g* than an *r*? I suppose to elevate and surprise.—Of this,

continued in current writing long before the time of James the First, except in enrolments of deeds, and other legal instruments ; now and then indeed, but very rarely, a signature may be found in which it occurs : but in the ordinary or secretary hand I have never met with it.—These circumstances, alone, therefore, without further examination, would ascertain every one of the papers that have been attributed to our poet, to be forged.

IN copying his *name*, the fabricator had for his direction the autographs with which we have furnished him, and therefore it is not at all surprising that here there should be some little resemblance to the archetypes before him ; though even here the imitation,

however, more will be said hereafter.—He had seen in the *fac-simile* of the Letter of Elizabeth of York to Sir John Paston, this *r* formed very rudely, and probably thought that a good archetype. However, he has gone beyond his original, by giving an open tail to this letter, of which he would find it difficult to produce a single precedent. For the sake of joining it to an *e* or some other letter, they used sometimes to run a stroke from about the middle of the *r* to the next letter ; but it was never made as it is here, like a *j* or *g*.—But of these *minutiæ* perhaps too much.

partly

partly from inability and partly from caprice, is bungling and incorrect enough: ⁶⁶ but to all the other writing attributed to our poet many other objections lie, beside those already made. It is manifest that when in health he wrote a small hand, as was the general mode of that time, at least among authors and actors, ⁶⁷ and that his writing was neat and uniform; none of which characters belong to the forged scrawls that have been ascribed to him.

⁶⁶ It is observable that our poet before he began to form the *W* in his christian name, made a kind of prelude or flourish (See Plate II. N^o. X. and XII.): this our fabricator observing, resolved that he would not omit so characteristick a singularity; but in doing it, in order to be quite sure of producing a proper effect, he has made in fact *two W's*. See Pl. II. N^o. viii.

⁶⁷ See Plate II.—Authors probably adopted a very small hand, for the sake of sparing paper, and compressing a great deal of matter in a little space. Sir William Dugdale, Anthony Wood, and many others in the last age, wrote so extremely small, that their Manuscripts are to a weak sight very difficult to read.—In their signatures our Ancestors, in the age of Elizabeth and James, followed two modes very different; writing either the very small hand now mentioned, (see the signatures of Massinger and Chapman in Plate II.) or a large fair Italian hand, (See the signatures of Nat. Field, Hathwaye the poet, and Lord Leycester, *ibid.*;) and this latter was the more common among the nobility.

BUT

BUT it is time to return to his Account of Lord Leycester's great bounty to him, for playing before him, which we are told was no less than "the summe o 50 Poundes."

IN this paper, as in all the rest, we have the spelling of no time. The corner of the paper is very dextrously wanting, so as to deprive us of the date, after the word *Christ*: devoured, we may suppose, by mice in that dark repository from whence it came. It is, however, ascertained to have been prior to September, 1588. As her Majesty knew not how to spell the name of her favourite Leycester, one might forgive Shakspeare for writing his name in a manner in which neither that nobleman nor others in that age wrote it, if the poet had not lived within fourteen miles of Kenelworth Castle from his infancy, and from his early years been acquainted with the troop of actors who served Lord Leycester. But these are but trifling objections to the manner in which the sums are here specified, I mean in Arabick numerals; a mode which those who have the slightest knowledge of former times know not to have been the practice of that age. If any exceptions
can

can be produced, (which I much doubt) they will but confirm the general rule. In several hundred Accounts of that age which I have perused, the sums mentioned are marked by Roman numerals.⁶⁸ The sum therefore here stated, should have been written xix^{li}. Thus, in “the Accompte of John Gibbes, one of the Chamberlains of Stratford-upon-Avon from the fowerth day of october 1589,

⁶⁸ In the Collection of Ordinances and Regulations for the Government of the Royal Housholds, printed by the Society of Antiquaries in 1790, we find under the head of “The Annual Expences of Queen Elizabeth” all the sums specified in Arabick numerals. But this paper was copied from the *DESIDERATA CURIOSA* of Mr. Peck, who printed from a MS. in his possession. I have not the smallest doubt that he adopted this mode as least troublesome, and that his original, like all the accounts of that age which I have seen, had Roman numerals.

In confirmation of my opinion I may observe, that in the same volume of *ORDINANCES* are given the Establishments of Henry Prince of Wales in 1610, and various other Royal Houshold Establishments, from MS. Harl. N^o. 642, and all the sums are printed by the editor in Arabick figures: but on examining the MS. itself, I find the sums are there all specified in Roman numerals: as is the case in every money-account of that age that I have seen. At the head of different sections of Establishments, they used Arabick figures, 1, 2, &c. so also in expressing the year of our Lord: but not in sums.—The modern fashion of printing has been adopted merely to save trouble. 7l. 8s. 4d. is much shorter than vii*li*. viii*s*. iiij*d*.

to St. Thomas thapostle in the same yeare,” (in the Archives of Stratford,) I find at the bottom of the first page, “Some vii.^{lb} iis. vd. ob. ; at the foot of the second,—“Some xiiiij.^{lb} vs. ; and subjoined to the third,—“Some xx.^{lb} vs. viiiid.”—I will not trouble you with any more instances : almost every book of that age in which any accounts are given, will prove that this was the ordinary practice of the age of Elizabeth. Even when the sums specified were very large, they still adhered to this tedious and troublesome mode. Thus, in a MS. receipt now before me, dated the xiith. of November 1586, the sum which in the body of the paper is stated to be “the som of two thowsande two hundrethe threeskore *and* seven powndes, nyne shyllings, sixe pence sterlinge,” is in the margin expressed thus : “M^{li}. M^{li}. ccLxvij^l. ix^s. vid.”

IN the HISTORY OF THE STAGE I ascertained the payment of a play at Court, when the actors were called upon to go into the country to perform at any of the royal palaces, to have been, in the time of Charles the First, twenty pounds ; and I conjectured that the same sum was probably paid by
Elizabeth.

Elizabeth. But I have since found from authentick documents that this was not the fact; and that in her time the sum paid for each representation at Court was no more than ten pounds. My error, however, in this instance was the foundation of the sum here charged to Lord Leycester in Arabick numerals (19 poundes): and, to mend the matter, that nobleman in his great liberality is made to pay thirty-one pounds more for his entertainment than was charged to him, and to exceed her Majesty's bounty on similar occasions in no less a sum than forty pounds. Whether Shakspeare and his troop were Lord Leycester's servants, or, if they were not his servants, how they came to be preferred to that company which were immediately under his patronage, very prudently has not been told.

To add to all the other denotations of forgery in this paper, our incomparable poet is represented as so grossly ignorant as not to know an earl's proper title. It is scarcely necessary to observe, (the fact having been of late so particularly noticed,) ⁶⁹ that the

⁶⁹ PLAYS and POEMS of WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE, 1790, vol. x. p. 3. n. 2.

most common address to peers under the degree of a Duke, was in that age *your honour*. His *grace* (here applied to Leycester) was then, as it is now, appropriated to dukes, and at an earlier period was given even to the person on the throne. Henry the Eighth is mentioned in some of the statutes of his reign by the appellation of “the king’s *Grace*.” This title was also occasionally given to Elizabeth. Nor was our author ignorant of this circumstance: of what indeed was he ignorant? In the First Part of HENRY THE FOURTH, in the scene where Falstaff and the Prince amuse themselves by alternately representing the King, “I would,” (says Falstaff, in the person of the Prince, and addressing Henry as King) “your *Grace* would take me with you: What means your *Grace*?”—The same title we find also given to the princes and princesses of the blood.⁷⁰

THAT in our poet’s time, as well as at

⁷⁰ So in Sir Thomas Pope’s Letter from Hatfield to the President of his newly founded College, dated the 22d of August, 1556:—“and at my lady Elizabeth her *Graces* desier, and at my wiffes request, they were receyved into the house again.” Warton’s LIFE of Sir THOMAS POPE, 2d edit. p. 88.

present,

present, your *grace* was the proper and usual mode of address to dukes, might be proved by innumerable instances. I shall only give one from Shakspeare himself. In the very first scene of the first act of HENRY THE EIGHTH, the Dukes of Norfolk and Buckingham are introduced meeting each other :

Buck. Good-morrow, and well met. How have you done,
Since last we saw in France ?

Nor. I thank your *Grace* :
Healthful, &c.

Our next curious relique is this :

“ FORRE our greate trouble inne getting alle inne orderre forre the lord Leycesterres comynge ande oure moneys layde oute there upponne 59 shyllinges.

“ Receyved o Masterre Hemynge forre thatte Nyghte 3 Poundes.

“ Masterre Lowine 2 shyllynge moure forre his Good Servyces ande welle play-inge.”

W^m. S.

ON this nonsensical and unintelligible trash I will not detain you long. All the observations already made on the orthogra-
phy,

phy, and the Arabick numerals, apply to the words *forre, alle, inne, moure, &c.* here found, and to the sums here specified. Where my lord Leycester was to come, who at this time was principal and who subordinate, some one better versed in decyphering nonsense than I am, must determine. Concerning "Master Lowin," I shall have occasion hereafter to speak more particularly. At present it is only necessary to observe that he was born in the year 1576, as appears from the inscription on his portrait in the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford⁷¹ (given, I believe, with many other portraits by Mr. John Aubrey): so that allowing to this paper the latest date it can bear, that of 1588, when he was rewarded for these "his good servyces ande welle playinge," he was just *twelve* years old.

HE might, however, without doubt we shall be told, perform the part of Arthur in KING JOHN, or the Duke of York in KING RICHARD III. But there is good ground for believing that those plays were not

⁷¹ From this portrait an Engraving was made, which was given in the edition of Shakspeare, 1790.

written till about eight years afterwards. “ Well then, he might have acted the part of a young prince, or of a young woman in some other play.”—Undoubtedly he might, had he been then on the stage, or had he been in the early part of his life in the same company with Shakspeare, Heminges, and Burbadge; but unluckily, (as I shall shew presently,) he does not appear to have joined their troop till after the Accession of King James.

THE two following papers relate to money, which Shakspeare *promises to pay* to John Heminges, for so his name should be written.

“ ONE Moneth from the date hereof I doe *promyse to paye* to my good and Worthy Freynd John Hemyng the sume of *five Pounds and five shillings* English Monye as a recompense for hys greate trouble in settling and doinge much for me at the Globe Theatre as also for hys trouble in going downe for me to statford *Witness my Hand*

W^m Shakspere.

September

the Nyntb 1589.

“ RE-

“ RECEIVED of Master W^m Shakspeare
the sum of five Pounds and five Shillings
good English Money thys Nynth Day of
October 1589.

Jn^o Hemynge.”

HERE we find, I think for the first and last time, the poet's name spelt in his own genuine manner; yet even that circumstance will not give any authenticity to this paper.—We have here fortunately a date, which beside the other uses it may serve, may prevent your lordship from supposing that you are reading some tradesman's promissory note of the year 1796.—It is observable that the old spelling, some of which is of no age, is here almost entirely deserted, and the orthography of about Charles the Second's time adopted. We have no *poundes*, no *shyllynges*, no *Masterre*, no *moure*, &c. But then on the other hand we have several very striking novelties. The first is our bard's *new* hand-writing, which you will perceive, if you look on the *fac-simile*, is as different from what we had before, as both are from the poet's true hand-writing. But what is most worthy of remark is, that Shakspeare, having been,
we

we are to suppose, some eight or ten years in London, and now at the head of an established company of comedians, has quite forgot the name of his native town, for which he writes *Statford* (for the letter *r* is still to be a stumbling-block). Need I call your attention to the sum of five guineas, here in fact, though not in words, promised to be paid? Some persons have sagaciously remarked, in defence of this paper, that in old accounts such sums as five pounds and five shillings sometimes occur.⁷² Who ever maintained

⁷² Since this was written, as a *decisive proof* of this fact, the following extract from the Royal Household Establishments, 4to. 1790, has been produced. (*Comparative Review, &c. ut supr.* p. 55.)

	£.	s.	D.
“ P. 255.—Joyners fee - -	19.	19.	0.
Record - - -	16.	16.	8.”

How this last sum, which I cannot find in the page mentioned, illustrates the question, I am unable to discover. I wonder the writer did not also give us such sums as—20l. 4s. 6d.—30l. 16. 4d. &c.—The sums required are those which *exactly* represent a certain number of guineas of the present day; of which without doubt in the infinite combinations of sums entered on ancient rolls, instances may be found, without in the smallest degree diminishing the suspicion that the sum specified in Shakespeare's *Promissory Note* naturally suggests.

The sums above stated, and all others in that paper, which is an Account of Q. Elizabeth's Annual Expences Civil and
Military

maintained that in the infinite combinations which sums are capable of, such payments may not occasionally have been made as five pounds and five shillings, or one pound and one shilling?—Yet even in these instances the usual mode of ancient times was, to write—xxi shillings; or cv shillings. But the question is not, whether some very rare instances of the kind above-mentioned do not occur: though twenty such should be pointed out, this circumstance in the paper before us, when *accompanied with many other suspicious circumstances*, must have weight, because it is highly probable that so very ignorant a person as the fabricator of it might have thought that pieces of the same precise value as our guinea then subsisted.

THE word *recompence*, though it was in use at that time, would not have been the word employed here, but *reward*; and *settling*⁷³ for adjusting is equally suspicious;

Military about the year 1578, should have been printed in Roman Numerals, which are found in all the accounts of that age. (See n. 68.) The other mode has been adopted in modern publications merely to save trouble.

⁷³ “ In Minsheu we have only—“ To settle, set or sit down. - - - Lat. *residere*.”

more

Nº IV.

Lord Southampton's
Pretended
Superscription.

To the Honble the Right
Honble Messrs William
Lockhart

Enclosed of money for the Blackpoors
the sum of two pounds and four
shillings odd English ready pay
by way of October 1089
for the same

Nº V.
John Heming's
Pretended
Receipt.

Nº VI.

John Heming's

Nº VII.

Hope and speak your name so much as able
and give you the copy of the letter from you

Nº IX.

John Lockhart

Nº VIII.

John Lockhart

Dear Madam I have the pleasure to receive from you
your devotedness and with due
respects

Wm Lockhart

Nº X.

John Heming's
Receipt

John Heming

Nº XI. John Heming

Nº XII.

John Heming

Nº XIV.

Richard Bembard

Nº XV.

John Heming

Nº XXI.

John Heming

Longman & Co.

Nº XVI.

John Heming

Nº XVII.

John Heming

Nº XVIII.

John Heming

Nº XIX.

John Heming

Nº XX.

John Heming

more especially as the great trouble taken by John Heminges “ in settling and doing much for Shakspeare,” was at the GLOBE Theatre, which I have shewn was not built for some years after 1589. But we want no aid from these minute observations. The whole is an evident forgery : and the Receipt signed with the name of John Hemyng was manifestly done by the same person who has attempted to exhibit the hand-writing of Lord Southampton.⁷⁴

WHEN I first looked on the *fac-simile* intended to represent Heminges’ hand-writing, though I was not then possessed of his autograph, it was manifest from the unsteadiness and irregularity of the strokes, that it could not be the genuine hand-writing of any one. Dr. Johnson, as some others do, inclined all his letters towards the left, as the hand-writing of most persons on the contrary inclines to the right : but no hand-writing was ever yet found, except that of a drunkard or a madman, that inclined alter-

⁷⁴ See Plate II. N^o. iv. (Superscription of the pretended Letter of Southampton,) and N^o. v. (John Heminges’ Receipt,) which I have placed together, to shew that these two were the performances of the same hand.

nately each way, as that now before us does. I determined, however, in every part of the present inquiry, not to rely on any general reasoning, but, whenever I could, to get at facts : and therefore spent some time at the Prerogative-Office with the hope of finding the original Will of this Actor. Unluckily that which is preserved in the Office as an original, though it has both the *Probat* and what is called the *Jurat*, is not an original ; having neither the testator's name nor that of the witnesses. By the means however of a deed executed by John Heminges, Feb. 10th, 1617-18, in performance of a trust reposed in him by Shakspeare, with which I have been furnished by Mr. Albany Wallis, and which will be found in the Appendix, (N^o. III.) I have obtained his Autograph, which is given in Plate II. N^o. vi. It proved, as I expected it would, to have no more resemblance to the signature subscribed to this forged receipt, than Hebrew or Chinsè characters have to English.

IN the spelling of this actor's name, as in that of Shakspeare, I have led the fabricator into another error. It was a very frequent practice in the last age to add a
final

final s to proper names ;⁷⁵ which, though at first a mere corruption, in process of time became so inveterate that the true name was lost. Thus, our author's friend, John *Combe*, was more frequently called John-a-*Combes* ; Lord Clarendon always calls Bishop *Earle*, *Earles* ; and the great Bacon is in the modern editions of his printed Works called *St. Albans*, as was his successor in the title, Henry Jermyn, though both he and Jermyn always wrote *St. Alban*.⁷⁶ The corruption of the name of Heminge, [*Heminges*] (for so it appeared to me, and I accordingly always printed it Heminge,) was, we find, adopted by himself, and accordingly in this his genuine autograph it is written *Heminges*, as it is also in the margin of that Will which is preserved in the Prerogative-Office as an original. Our forger, however, has given us *Hemynge*.

ON examining the Register of the parish

⁷⁵ See POEMS and PLAYS of WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE, 1790, Vol. I. Part ii. p. 177, n. 1.

⁷⁶ See his Signature subscribed to his Confession, presented to the House of Lords in 1621. PARL. HIST. Vol. V. p. 415.—The autograph of Henry Jermyn, Earl of St. Alban, I have seen.

of Aldermanbury, since I began this Letter, I found an entry of this actor's marriage, which had escaped me on a former search. He was married on the xth of March 1587-8, to Rebecca Nuell, Widow.—It was certainly a great mark of his friendship to our poet to leave his bride in the following year, to go down to this *terra incognita*, STATFORD: but how far the lady may have relished such a desertion, I have no means of ascertaining.

I have already noticed the form of this promissory note, which is so completely modern, that the doubters concerning the mistake of five pounds five shillings might, methinks, give the forger credit for that absurdity, when they see such plain marks of fraud and folly in every other part of the paper. I run no risk, when I assert that no such form of promissory note existed at that time, because luckily I am able, from an old theatrical register, to give the forms then actually used in bills of debt, (the promissory note of that time,) payable both on demand, and one month after date; which I beg leave to recommend as precedents to all persons who may hereafter have occasion to
make old MSS. M. [*Mem^m*]

M. [*Mem^m*] That I Gabrell spencer the 5 of apell. have borowed of phillippe henslo the some of thirtie shellynges in Redy money to be payed unto hime agayne *when he shalle demande yt.* I faye borowed—xxx^s.
Gabiell Spencer.”⁷⁷

THE above, we see, is the true promissory note on demand, of that time. The following is a Note or bill of debt payable one month after date, signed by an actor, who at one period performed in our author’s company:

“ THE 1 and twentie daye of septtember a thousand six houndard borrowed of Mr. Henslowe in Redie monie the som of fortie shellyngs to be paid the twentie daie of october next folleinge the date her of *in witnes ber of I set to my hand.*

John Duke.⁷⁸

ANOTHER form was,—“ Received 30 die Januarii 1598, of — the sum of — to

⁷⁷ A player; one of the Lord Admiral’s Servants.

⁷⁸ Henslowe’s Register, MS.—From this autograph the fac-simile in Pl. II. N^o. xv. has been made. The note, as well as the signature, is in the handwriting of John Duke, who was at this time one of Lord Worcester’s Servants.

bee repayed unto him or his assignes upon the last of February next ensuinge, for payment whereof I bind me, my heires, executors and administrators.”—But none of these, whether entered in the book of the lender, or written on separate slips of paper, were indorsable over, nor could an action at law be maintained on them.⁷⁹

IV. A LETTER FROM SHAKSPEARE TO ANNA HATHERREWAYE.

BUT now I ought in due form to invoke Venus, and her son, and all the Loves and Graces, to listen to my tale ; for lo! I am next to present you with a letter from the Stratford youth to the lady whom he after-

⁷⁹ Being fully convinced, on general recollection, that no such Promissory Notes as that which has been here examined, were in use in the time of Shakspeare, and having produced examples of the kind of unnegotiable paper-security, or bills unsealed, then given for money due, I did not think it necessary to turn over my law-books, or to go deeper into the subject : but some very judicious observations, communicated by a friend, furnish so clear and satisfactory a history of the origin and gradual extension of Bills Obligatory, of which our present Promissory Notes are the genuine offspring, that my readers, I am confident, will be pleased with their insertion. Being too long for this place, they will be found in the APPENDIX, No. I.

wards married. Though love, like death, levels all distinctions, yet as that passion, which the poet tells us first invented verse, certainly exalts the mind as well as improves the heart, and makes almost every man eloquent, what may we not expect from the tender effusions of such a soul as Shakspeare's in such a situation!—Prepare then, my lord, to behold our bard in circumstances in which he has never before been viewed.

THIS precious letter is accompanied with a lock of the poet's hair, “too intrinse to unloose” and most curiously braided,⁸⁰ in speaking of which he assures his DEAR-

⁸⁰ To the following lines in our author's beautiful poem entitled *The LOVER'S COMPLAINT*, (edit. 1790.) we are, without doubt, indebted for this *braided lock*:

“Look here, what tributes wounded fancies sent me

“Of paled pearls, and rubies red as blood:

“And lo! behold these talents of their *hair*

“With twisted metal *amourously impleach'd*,

“I have receiv'd from many a several fair,” &c.

A person who viewed this lock of hair, observed that it has a wonderful property belonging to it, of retaining the same *close* and *compact* appearance which it had when originally discovered, though since that time it is said to have furnished materials to ornament several rings, decorated with proper inscriptions in honour of our immortal bard.

ESSTE ANNA, that “no rude hande hathe knottedde itte, thye Willys alone hathe done the worke. Neytherre the gyldedde bawble thatte envyrones the heade of Majestye noe norre honourres moste weyghtye wulde give mee halfe the joye as didde thysse mye lyttle worke forre thee. The feelinge thatte dydde neareste approche untoe itte was thatte whiche commethe nygheste untoe God meeke and Gentle Charytye.”— I shall not at present trouble you with any more of this soft epistle than what I have now transcribed. At the bottom of the page we find, ANNA HATHERREWAYE, which is meant for the superscription, the poet foreseeing that two centuries afterwards it would become the fashionable mode to discard the superfluous *To* or *For*, with which such addresses were formerly introduced. But how far the lady here meant was entitled to this address, or how probable it was that this letter should ever reach her hands, may be worth our inquiry. The truth is, she had no title whatsoever to either of those names: she was christened plain Anne, and her name was not HATHERREWAYE, as she is here absurdly called, but HATH-
AWAY.

YOUR

YOUR lordship well remembers the first rise of the yet prevailing passion for long and sonorous christian names, instead of the more familiar appellations with which our simpler ancestors were contented. The Lady Elizas, Lady Matildas, and Lady Lou-sas, have now gained a complete ascendancy, and a Lady Betty or Lady Fanny is no where to be found. Lady Betty Germaine was, I believe, the last in this country ; and you have, I think, still in Ireland, one Lady Betty, of the noble house of Cavendish, who keeps up the memory of the *olden* time. But to talk of ANNA *Hatherrewaye* in 1582, is truly ridiculous. Master Slender, and “sweet ANNE Page, might have taught the fabricator better. In the Indexes of the Prerogative Office, in which the entries are made in Latin, and in some old Parish Registers, where the entries have been made by clergymen in the same language, we find ANNAS and MARIAS enough; and so also in some of our oldest poets, in imitation of the Cynthia and Delia of Propertius and Tibullus, and in order to give a dignity to their verse : but in plain prose the most diligent researcher will, I am confident, not discover a single Anna in the sixteenth century.

ture. The name of the father of this lady, here absurdly called *Hatherrewaye*, was, as Mr. Rowe long since mentioned, *Hathaway*; and the tradition which he received from Stratford upon this subject, is confirmed by the Will of Lady Barnard our poet's grand-daughter, which I discovered and published some years ago; and by a deed executed by her, in my possession. She in her Will expressly notices several of her relations of the name of Hathaway. As to the true orthography of both the christian and surname of the person to whom this letter is pretended to be addressed, we need only consult the Register of Stratford, where the following entry occurs under the head of Marriages in 1579-80. "Jan. 17. William Wilson to ANNE HATHAWAY of Shotterye." I once thought it not improbable that the lady whose marriage is here recorded, afterwards became the wife of our poet; but that could not have been the case for a reason which I have assigned in his Life. However it sufficiently establishes the forgery before us.⁸¹

I CANNOT

⁸¹ I suppose it will be asked, why could not the fabricator

I CANNOT dismiss the first two words of this Epistle without observing that *dear* and *dearest* was not so common an address at that period as at present. Had the fabricator of this letter given us—"My *sweet* Anne," it might have passed well enough. Thus, Sir John Harrington begins his Letter to his lady, dated Dec. 27, 1602, with the words—"Sweet *Mall*," for which, if the maker of these MSS. had invented an epistle for that Knight, we undoubtedly should have had—*My dearest Maria*.

THOUGH, after what has been now stated, it may seem superfluous to animadvert fur-

tor as well have written this name *Hathaway* as *Hath-errewaye*? To these and other questions of a similar kind it is by no means necessary to give any answer. He *has* written it falsely: Shakspeare could not have written it so; and the consequence necessarily follows, that the paper is forged.—If, however, it were necessary to assign a reason for this misnomer, it would not be very difficult. It might have arisen from caprice, and a foolish notion that this sort of variation in this and other instances would give an air of truth to these papers: or it might have arisen from mere ignorance, and the vulgar or inaccurate pronunciation of one person dictating to another. But speculations of this kind are endless, and in the present case wholly unnecessary. Whatever the cause or motive may have been, the forgery is proved by the *fact*.

ther on this spurious paper, I must not omit to observe that the word *themselves* is here (as in other places), contrary to the practice of that age, spelt as one word instead of two [thenne indeede shalle Kynges *themmeselves* bowe ande paye homage toe itte]: nor can I dismiss it without particularly noticing the other sentence which I have transcribed from it.

WHENEVER hereafter any light shall be given that may lead to a discovery of the now unknown hand that has dared to fabricate this tissue of imposture, the vulgarisms, and the sentiments found in it, may be worth attending to, as they may aid the detection. Thus, from the present contemptuous mention of KINGS, it is no very wild conjecture to suppose that the unknown writer is not extremely adverse to those modern republican zealots who have for some time past employed their feeble, but unwearied, endeavours to diminish that love and veneration which every true Briton feels, and I trust will ever feel, for ROYALTY, so happily and beneficially inwoven in our inestimable constitution. Such, however, was his ignorance of the period to which the Letter
before

before us must be referred, that, for the sake of the sentiment, the contemptuous language of the present day is introduced at a time when it was as little known, as the orthography and phraseology which the writer has employed.

OUR author was married to Anne Hathaway in or before September, 1582. We will suppose this love-letter to have been written a few months before, in the April or May of that year, at which time he was just eighteen years old. Of the Queen, who had then sat on the throne above twenty-three years, it is not necessary here to give any minute delineation. However the splendour of her character may have been a little abated by the lapse of time, the inquisition that has been made into the history of that age, and the more definite notions of the prerogatives of the crown and the rights of the people now entertained and happily established, it is certain that her virtues gave her an unbounded ascendant over her subjects; and though few of our princes have exercised a more arbitrary dominion, the boundaries of our admirable constitution not being then, as at present,
nicely

nicely ascertained, she unquestionably was not in that age thought to infringe the liberties of the people. No stronger proof of this can be produced than her great popularity. Every act of her reign appearing to spring from a regard to the welfare and happiness of her subjects, imperious as she was in many instances, she was almost idolized by them. At once dignified and familiar, respected and beloved, she almost every year of her reign made a Progress among them, and won their hearts by her affability and condescension.⁸² — “ There was no Prince living, (says a good observer, who lived near the time,) who was so tender of honour, and so exactly stood for the preservation of sovereignty, that was so great a courtier of her people, yea of the commons, and that stooped and descended lower in presenting her person to the publick view, as she passed in her progresses and perambulations, and in the ejaculation of her prayers for her people.”⁸³—The de-

⁸² In one of these Progresses she visited Leycester at Kenelworth Castle, in 1576, when our youthful bard, among the crowds that flocked thither from all the neighbourhood, might have seen her.

⁸³ Naunton's *FRAGMENTA REGALIA*, p. 12.

testable

testable doctrines of French Philosophy and the imaginary Rights of Man, had not yet been inculcated; nor had Englishmen yet been sedulously taught to throw away “respect, tradition, form, and ceremonious duty,” and to accept of *French liberty* and *French equality*, instead of that beautiful and salutary gradation of ranks, which forms an essential part of our admirable constitution; where the distinction of conditions is so easy and imperceptible, that almost every man under the first personages of the land places himself, in his own estimation, without offence, in a somewhat higher order than that to which he is strictly entitled; and where men of the lowest origin may always by their own merit attain the highest honours and emoluments of the state.—A due subordination then everywhere prevailed; which naturally produced a profound reverence for persons distinguished by their noble birth and the offices they held, from the *worshipful* Justice of the Peace to the grave counsellors and splendid courtiers who surrounded the throne. “It was (as has been truly observed) an ingenuous uninquisitive time, when all the passions and affections of the people were lapped up in such

such an innocent and humble obedience, that there was never the least contestations nor capitulations with the Queen; nor, though she very frequently consulted with her subjects, any further reasons urged of her actions than *her own will*.⁸⁴

ADD to this the powerful operation produced in the minds of the people at that time by the alterations in religion. “As they had been lately made,” (I use the words of a learned writer yet living,) as their importance was great, and as the benefits of the change had been earned at the expence of much blood and labour, all these considerations begot a zeal for religion which hardly ever appears under other circumstances. This zeal had an immediate and very sensible effect on the morals of the reformed. It improved them in every instance; especially as it produced a cheerful

⁸⁴ THE DISPARITY (written by Lord Clarendon in his youth). RELIQ. WOTTON. 1685, p. 189.

Happily for us, no such reason of action can now be urged by our Kings, the boundaries between the prerogatives of the crown and the privileges of the people having since the period here described been nicely ascertained, so as to leave the executive branch of our Constitution no power but what is salutary and beneficial for the the people.
submission

submission to the Government, which had rescued them from their former slavery, and was still their only support against the returning dangers of superstition. Thus religion acting with all its power, and that too heightened by gratitude and even self-interest, bound obedience on the minds of men with the strongest ties.⁸⁵ And luckily for the Queen this obedience was further secured to her by the high uncontroverted notions of royalty which at that time obtained amongst the people.”⁸⁶

To prevent these notions from fading from their minds, the Homilies, which were published by authority and enjoined to

⁸⁵ “ One of these (says this writer) was the prejudice of education; and some uncommon methods were used to bind it fast on the minds of the people.—A book called EIPHNAPXIA, *sive* ELIZABETHA, was written in *Latin* verse by one Ockland, containing the highest panegyrics on the Queen’s character and government, and setting forth the transcendent virtues of her ministers. This book was enjoined by authority to be taught, as a classick author, in grammar-schools, and was of course to be gotten by heart by the young scholars throughout the kingdom.—This was a matchless contrivance to imprint a sense of royalty on the minds of the people.” Hurd, *ubi supr.*

⁸⁶ MORAL and POLITICAL DIALOGUES, by the Rev. Mr. Hurd, (now Lord Bishop of Worcester,) vol. ii. p. 27.

be read every Sunday by the Clergy in their respective churches, inculcated unconditional and passive obedience ⁸⁷ to the prince on the throne, which on no account or pretence whatsoever was it lawful to infringe.

SUCH was the period, when our Stratford youth, whose tender mind was probably impressed with a sense of loyalty on each day of the week employed in the acquisition of learning, and who was further confirmed in the same sentiments by the doctrines enjoined to be taught on the day devoted to the functions of religion, is made to express himself concerning the diadem of kings, in the style which one of the Regicides would have used in the following century, or one of the Rulers of France would employ at this day.

WHEN Cromwell had no further use for the Rump Parliament, and kicked them, as they well deserved, out of doors, he desired one of his Janizaries (as Whitelocke tells us) to take away that *fool's-bauble*, the Speaker's

⁸⁷ The Homilies, it has been observed, contain more precepts in support of this vile and slavish doctrine, than all the writings of Filmer and his followers.

mace.”⁸⁸ A bauble, in ancient time, had various significations. It originally meant a jewel,⁸⁹ and afterwards a temporary scaffold for any scenick exhibition or pageant.⁹⁰ It also signified the truncheon which licensed fools used to carry in their hands.—In a secondary and derivative sense deduced from the original barbarous term *baubellum*, (a jewel,) in process of time the word in popular language came to signify any slight toy, gewgaw, or trifling piece of finery; and in this sense it is employed by our poet himself in several of his plays: but I have some doubt whether the word had obtained that signification so early as the middle of the reign of Elizabeth. Be that as it may, the sentiment before us may have been suggested either by the following passage in a Letter of Cromwell’s to his Secretary

⁸⁸ Hume, and some other Historians, make him say—“What shall we do with *this bauble?*” here, take it away: by which the point of the allusion is lost.—The *fool’s bauble* was a short truncheon with a carved head and ass’s ears.

⁸⁹ Roger Hoveden, as Minshieu, and (after him) Dr. Johnson, observe, has the word *baubellum* in this sense: “*Omnia baubella sua dedit Othoni.*” fol. 449. b.

⁹⁰ Barrett’s *ALVEARIE*, 1580, in v.

Thurloe, relative' to a petition presented to his HIGHNESS! by the wife of William Beacham, mariner, which was printed about thirty years ago,—“ I have not the particular shining *bauble* or feather in my cap for crowds to gaze at, or kneel to, but I have power and resolution for foes to tremble at;”⁹¹ or (which is still more probable) by these satirical verses of Swift :

“ A prince, the moment he is *crown'd*,
 “ Inherits every virtue round,
 “ As emblems of the sovereign power,
 “ Like other *baubles* of the Tower.”⁹²

CROMWELL, or some of his flagitious colleagues, if I remember right, speaking of Charles the First, said that he considered him only as the HIGH CONSTABLE of the nation. If, in the present passage, we had in the more measured language of our modern republicans—“ Neither the gilded bauble

⁹¹ GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE for 1766, p. 412. This Letter had, I believe, appeared in the ANNUAL REGISTER, a few years before.

⁹² ON POETRY, A RHAPSODY. 1733.

that

that environs the head of the CHIEF MAGISTRATE," &c. all would have been uniform and complete.

THE *counterfeit* ornament with which the fabricator of this paper has environed the head of Majesty, is perfectly in unison with all the rest of these factitious manuscripts. IT is, however, worthy of remark, that our poet was better acquainted with the diadem, than to call it a *gilded* bauble; in every place where he mentions a crown (that I can recollect) describing it, truly, as made of gold. Thus in his K. RICHARD II.

“ Now is the *golden crown* like a deep well,—.”

Again, in K. HENRY IV. P. II.

“ Why does the *crown* lie there upon his pillow,

“ Being so troublesome a bed-fellow!

“ O polish'd perturbation, *golden* care,” &c.

Again, on the same occasion, after his son has taken the crown away, the king exclaims,

“ How quickly nature falls into revolt,

“ When *gold* becomes her object!”

So

So also, in MACBETH :

“ ——— Hie thee hither,
 “ That I may pour my spirits in thine ear ;
 “ And chastise with the valour of my tongue
 “ All that impedes thee from the *golden round*,
 “ Which fate and metaphysical aid doth seem
 “ To have thee *crown'd* withal.”

Again, in the same play, where the eight kings appear :

“ Thy *crown* does sear mine eye-balls :—And
 thy air,
 “ Thou other *gold-bound* brow, is like the first.”*

IF it should be said that in his earlier days he was unacquainted with this circumstance, the answer is, that at that period of his life, instead of supposing the diadem to have been a piece of gilded metal, he was much more likely to have fancied it still more rich and resplendent than it really is,

* At the opening of the Session in 1614, King James told the parliament that his integrity was like the whiteness of his robe, and his purity like the metal of *gold* in his *crown*. PARL. HIST. vol. v. p. 273.

and

and to have emblazoned it in his youthful imagination with all the precious stones of the East.

I HAVE but one or two observations more to make on this love-epistle. It has not been proved that our poet wrote any of his admirable plays while he was yet at school, or recently after he had left it, though with due diligence some discovery of this kind may be furnished from the inexhaustible store-house of curiosities already in part exposed to the publick view. However, when he wrote to his *dearesste Anna* that “the feelinge that dydde neareste approche untoe itte was thatte which commeth nygh-este untoe God, meeke and gentle charytye,” it is evident that the sentiment of his own *PORTIA* was passing through his youthful mind :

“The quality of *mercy* is not strain’d ;

“It droppeth, as the *gentle* rain from heaven

“Upon the place beneath : - - -

“’Tis mightiest in the mightiest ; it becomes

“The throned monarch better than his crown :

“His sceptre shews the force of temporal
power,

“The

“ The attribute to awe and majesty,
 “ Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings;
 “ But mercy is above this scepter’d sway,
 “ It is enthroned in the hearts of kings,
 “ It is an attribute to God himself;
 “ And earthly power doth then shew *likest God’s*,
 “ When *mercy* seasons justice.”⁹³

IT is observable that our author here speaks with somewhat more respect of the *sceptre* of kings, than the writer of the epistle before us has done of the “ precious diadem” with which their brows are environed; and in one of his early historical plays his veneration for Majesty is still more apparent. The unhappy Richard the Second asserts, that

“ Not all the water in the rough rude sea
 “ Can wash the balm from an anointed king;
 “ The breath of worldly men can not depose
 “ The deputy elected by the lord.”

⁹³ It may be worth remarking, that in my edition the writer might have found at the bottom of the page, where this encomium on mercy occurs,

“ And kings *approache the nearest unto God*,
 “ By giving life and safety unto men.”

AND

AND in the same play we find the Bishop of Carlisle expressing the same sentiments :

“ What subject can give sentence on his king ?

“ And who sits here, that is not Richard’s subject ?

“ Thieves are not judg’d, but they are by to hear,

“ Although apparent guilt be seen in them :

“ And shall the figure of God’s majesty,

“ His captain, steward, deputy elect,

“ Anointed, crowned, planted many years,

“ Be judg’d by subject and inferior breath,

“ And he himself not present ? O, forbid it, God !”

Thus also, the King in HAMLET :

“ Let him go, Gertrude ; do not fear our person ;

“ There’s such divinity doth hedge a king,

“ That treason can but peep to what it would,

“ Acts little of his will.”

WITH the truth or rectitude of these sentiments we have at present nothing to do : they are produced solely to shew the prevalent opinions of our author’s age, and that, I conceive, they do most effectually.

OUR youthful lover's last compliment to his mistress is couched in the following terms: "I cheryshe thee in my hearte, forre thou arte ass a talle Cedarre stretchynge forthe its branches ande succourynge smaller Plants fromme nyppynge Winneterre orr the boysterouse Wyndes."

As Shakspeare is known to have been a curious observer of nature, we might suppose that this description was suggested by what he had himself seen: but as it has been shewn that there were no Cedars in England till after the Restoration,* where could this image have been presented to our Stratford Youth? In the Bible, without doubt we shall be told. In Holy Writ we find that the Cedar of Lebanon was "exalted in height above all the trees of the field;" that it had "fair *branches*, and a shadowing shroud: the waters made him great, the deep set him up on high with her rivers running round about his *plants* [his *own* plants]: all the fowls of heaven made their

* Mr. Evelyn is on good ground supposed to have first brought the Cedar tree into England, about the year 1662. See a curious Memoir on this subject, by the late Sir John Cullum, in the GENT. MAGAZINE for 1779, p. 138.

nests in his boughs, and under his shadow
 dwell all generations.”*—But where did
 our author discover that the wide-spreading
 branches of this goodly tree protect the
 smaller plants under it from the nipping
 blasts of winter? In some Natural History,
 I suppose, that will shortly be *brought for-*
ward: but till it appears, it may be safely
 asserted that the very reverse of this is the
 truth, and that an “umbrageous multitude
 of leaves,” instead of succouring, destroys
 all vegetation under it.

V. VERSES BY SHAKSPEARE, ADDRESSED
 TO ANNA HATHERREWAYE.

WE are at length arrived at the Verses
 pretended to have been addressed by Shak-
 speare to his mistress. As a specimen of
 them, take the first stanza. Is there, says
 the lispng poet,

Is there inne heav-enne aught more rare
 Thanne thou sweete nympe of Avon fayre
 Is there onne earthe a manne more trewe
 Thanne Willy Shakspeare is toe you

* EZEK. c. 31.

Is this, I know you will say, a love-sonnet, or the posy of a ring? I shall not therefore sicken your Lordship with any more of this namby-pamby stuff. Let me however draw your attention to the rhythm of the first line, on which we have the decision of Spencer: “*Heaven* being used short as one syllable, when it is in verse stretched with a *diastole*, is like a lame dog that holdeth up one leg.”⁹⁴ In our poet’s genuine compositions we never find any such hobbling metre.

VI. LETTER FROM SHAKSPEARE TO
THE EARL OF SOUTHAMPTON.

VII. THE EARL’S ANSWER.

THE Letters which are pretended to have passed between our poet and his patron, Henry Earl of Southampton, if possible surpass in absurdity any thing we have yet examined: for there is not a single circumstance belonging to them, that is not so evidently fraudulent, that the mere statement of them, without any amplification or colouring whatsoever, will be sufficient to detect and expose the imposture.

⁹⁴ Letter to Gabriel Harvey, 10 April, 1580.

IN my edition of our poet's works, I endeavoured to do all honour to this highly distinguished and most amiable nobleman, by collecting some Memoirs of his life, which I have since enlarged; and if they should not become too bulky for an episode, they may perhaps be interwoven in the Life of Shakspeare. Having been sedulously, though at intervals, employed on that work for two years past, and collected more materials for it than the most sanguine expectation could have hoped to procure, to say nothing of the time which I had previously expended (perhaps idly, but certainly agreeably to myself, and I hope not wholly unprofitably to the publick,) on the illustration of both his works and his history, I could not help smiling at the observation of some of the criticks of the day, that I had shewn great temerity in thus hastily deciding on the authenticity of these Manuscripts. When I tell your Lordship that in the course of my inquiries, I have, with the aid of authentick and indisputable documents, overturned almost every traditional story that has been received concerning Shakspeare for near a century past, need I employ many words to shew that I was at
least

least not unacquainted with the subject of the late spurious publication? The truth is, that a single perusal of it was sufficient; and in one hour afterwards the entire foundation of the Letter I am now writing was laid, and all the principal heads of objection briefly set down. The expanding of the topics, and the minute examination of authorities, necessarily required some time.

I HAVE already observed, that several of these papers have been formed either on some existing archetype, or some received tradition concerning Shakspeare; which was considered as a canvass which might commodiously and plausibly be wrought upon and filled up: and if the artist, or rather artists, had known any thing of drawing, had not all their colours been made of brickdust, and the whole piece crowded with distorted and disgusting figures, without any regard to nature, or truth, or *costume*, there might have been some difficulty in distinguishing the copy from the original.⁹⁵

THE

⁹⁵ Even where the task is undertaken by persons of talents much superior to the miserable and bungling artificers employed

THE fabrication we are now considering, took its rise from a tradition, first mentioned by Mr. Rowe, and transmitted to him (though not immediately) from Sir William D'Avenant,—that Lord Southampton gave our author, to complete a purchase, no less a sum than one thousand pounds, which was then certainly equal to five thousand at this day. Having the highest veneration for this nobleman, I am far from wishing to diminish his well-earned fame; and I have not the smallest doubt that he was extremely liberal to Shakspeare: he appears indeed, from every circumstance that I have collected concerning him, to have been the very soul of bounty and of honour: but still I am possessed of indisputable documents,

ployed in the present fabrication, happily for mankind they cannot guard themselves on every side against detection.—It is extremely difficult, (as Archbishop Tension has justly observed,) “to imitate such great authors in so lively and exact a form, as without suspicion to pass for them. They who are the most artificial counterfeits in this way, do not resemble them as the son does the father, but, at best, as the dead picture does the living person.”—*BACONIANA*, 8vo. 1679.—The resemblance in the present case is that of a weather-beaten alehouse sign in a country village to a portrait by Titian or Sir Joshua Reynolds.

which

which prove decisively that his liberality to our poet must have been greatly magnified, and that this story in all its parts cannot be true. True or false, however, it was thought, to be a good subject for a correspondence between the patron and the poet to be engrafted upon. In such a correspondence, what would have been the natural order of things? First, would pass a Letter in which this amiable encourager and patron of talents, wherever they were found, would offer to bestow a sum of money on his humble follower, either in return for the poems dedicated to him by Shakspeare, or from an admiration of those inimitable dramas which he and his friend the Earl of Rutland used to see with such pleasure.⁹⁶ The poet's Letter of thanks would follow of course. Such, I say, would have been the natural order, if any such correspondence had really passed between them. But this order would not at all have suited our fabricator ;

⁹⁶ " My Lord Southampton and Lord Rutland come not to the Court [at Nonesuch]. The one doth but very seldome. They pass away the tyme in London *merely in going to plaies every day.*—Strand, this thursday the 11 of october, 1599." SYDNEY PAPERS, ii. 132.

for then, in making the offer on the part of the patron, a specifick sum must have been mentioned; and if some inquisitive researcher, like myself, should happen to be possessed of documents that ascertained this bounty to have been very different from the sum fixed upon, detection would instantly follow. To evade this difficulty, though the fabricator had certainly never heard of the ὑπερον προτερον of the Rhetoricians, it was in fact adopted: and hence the preposterous order of the two letters which I shall now transcribe; in the first of which the poet thanks his patron for his “great bounty” already bestowed on him, and in the other the patron, in reply, tells the poet what he knew already;—but that was not sufficient for our schemer; it was necessary that *the reader should know it also.*

“ *Coppye of mye Letter toe hys Grace offe
Southampton.*

“ Mye Lorde,

“ DOE notte esteeme me a sluggarde nor
tardye for thus havynge delayed to answerre
or rather toe thank you for youre greate
z Bountye

Bountye I doe assure you my graciouse ande
 good Lorde that thryce I have essayed toe
 wryte and thryce mye efforts have benne
 fruitlesse I knowe notte what toe saye
 Prose Verse alle all is naughte gratitude
 is alle I have toe utter and that is tooe
 greate and tooe *sublyme a feeling* for poore
 mortalls toe expresse O my Lord itte is a
 Budde which Bllossommes Bllooms butte
 never dyes itte cherifhes sweete Nature
 and lulls the calme Breaste toe softe softe
 repose Butte mye goode Lorde forgive
 thys mye departure fromme mye subjecte
 which was toe retturne thankes and thankes
 I Doe retturne O excuse mee mye Lorde
 more at presente I cannotte

Yours devotedlye and withe due respecte

W^m Shakspeare.”

“ Deare Willam

“ I CANNOTTE doe lesse than thanke
 you forre youre kynde Letterre butte whye
 dearest Freynd talke soe muche offe gra-
 titude mye offerre was double the somme
 butte you woulde accepte butte the halfe
 thereforre you neede notte speake soe muche
 onn thatte subjectte as I have benee thye
 Freynd

Freynd soe will I continue aughte thatte
I canne doe forre thee praye commande mee
ande you shall fynde mee

Julye the 4

Yours

Southampton."

[*Superscribed*]

“ To the Globe Theatre
Forre Mast^r Willam
Shakspeare.”

HERE, as in all the other papers, the proofs of fraud are so numerous, that they produce conviction on the first view. The orthography, the phraseology, and hand-writing, all betray the imposture, and render it almost superfluous to say a word on the subject.— However, I must go through my task.

To take these Letters in their order. The handwriting of the first has not the slightest resemblance to that of Shakspeare. The spelling is the spelling of no time. The writer however, it is observable, though he retains his *ande*, forgets to spell *for* with the duplication observed in other instances (*forre*); but, by way of compensation

sation, gives us *bllossomes* and *bllooms*,⁹⁷ a combination of consonants of which no example can be produced in the English language, from the time of Robert of Gloucester to this day.

NEED I insist on the improbability of our careless poet ever keeping a *copy* of any Letter he wrote, or of this being the copy of a Letter addressed to his GRACE of Southampton. He well knew, as I have already shewn, that this was not the proper designation of an Earl; and no very uncommon book, which I suppose will presently be produced from Shakspeare's newly discovered library, with sundry annotations by our poet, might have taught the writer to have avoided this absurdity. Whitney concludes the Epistle Dedicatory to the earl of Leycester, prefixed to his EMBLEMS in 1586,—“Your *Honours* humble and faithfull Servant, Geffrey Whitney.” So also in the concluding Emblem addressed to the same nobleman:

⁹⁷ It has been justly observed, that Shakspeare was too good a naturalist not to know that a bud first *blooms*, and then *bllossoms*. *Free Reflections*, &c. 8vo. 1796.

“Which

“ Which if you shall receive with pleasinge looke,
 “ I shall rejoyce, and thinke my labour lighte ;
 “ And pray the Lorde your *Honour* to preserve,
 “ Our noble Queene and cuntrye long to serve.”

BUT were I even to allow that GRACE, instead of being in those days the usual address to Dukes, and sometimes to the Queen⁹⁸ and the princes of the blood, was also used in speaking to or of Earls, it would not exempt this Letter from the charge of forgery : for the phrase—*his Grace of Norfolk*, or *his Grace of Bucks*, is much posterior to the sixteenth century.

INSTEAD of “ Mye Lorde,” with which words this Letter commences, we ought to have had—“ Right Honorable ;” which, though it was not the only mode of that time, (the other being sometimes used,) was the more ordinary mode, especially from an inferior to a superior ; and certainly was our

⁹⁸ “ Her Ma.tie remeaneth here at Nonsyche as yet, but mindeth to remove to Otlands about a senight hens. Hir *Grace* liketh well of this place.” Letter from Lord Talbot to his father the Earl of Shrewsbury, dated “ frō the Couert at Nonsyche the xxiii.th of June, 1580.” SHREWSBURY PAPERS, ii. 228.

author’s

author's mode, as appears from his Dedications to this nobleman.

THE origin of the indefinite words—"youre greate bountye," has been already pointed out.—When the following words were written, "*thryce* I have *essay'd* toe write, and *thryce* mye efforts have been fruitlesse," it requires no great sagacity to discover that Ovid suggested this thought :

"Ter conata loqui, ter fletibus ora rigavit :"—

but I entirely acquit the author of having ever read the original. He was without doubt indebted to Milton's imitation of his favourite poet :

"*Thrice* he *essay'd*, and *thrice*, in spite of scorn,
"Tears, such as angels weep, burst forth."⁹⁹

A SUBSEQUENT passage is still more

⁹⁹ He might likewise have remembered Dryden's translation of the sixth *Æneid* :

"He twice *essay'd* to cast his son in gold,
"Twice from his hands he dropp'd the forming mould."

"Then *thrice* around his neck his arms he threw,
"And *thrice* the flitting shadow slipp'd away,
"Like winds, or empty dreams that fly the day."

worthy

worthy of remark ;—I mean where the poet tells his patron that “ gratitude is a budde which bllossomes, bllooms, butte never dyes ; itte cherishes sweete *Nature*, ande *lulls* the calme breaste *toe softe softe repose.*”—

OF all the editors of our poet’s works, Dr. Warburton is, I believe, the last person that he would consider as his *fidus Achates*.— Yet were this letter genuine, it would do the Bishop more honour than perhaps all his other literary triumphs ; for it would prove that he read the very soul of Shakespeare ; or rather that the bard two centuries ago expressed himself in exactly the same language as the editor in the middle of the present century employed in his Commentary, without the slightest communication with each other, or either knowing what the other wrote.

IN the fifth act of *ANTONY and CLEOPATRA*, (scene ii.) the Egyptian Queen, when she is in the monument, thus reflects upon the suicide she was about to commit :

“ My desolation does begin to make

“ A better life : ’tis paltry to be Cæsar ;

“ Not

“ Not being fortune, he’s but fortune’s knave,
 “ A minister of her will ; And it is great
 “ To do that thing that ends all other deeds ;
 “ Which shackles accidents, and bolts up change ;
 “ Which sleeps, and never palates more the dung,
 “ The beggar’s nurse and Cæsar’s.”

BUT, says the Commentator, we should read thus :

“ ————— And it is great
 “ To do that thing that ends all other deeds ;
 “ Which shackles accidents, and bolts up change,
 “ [*Lulls wearied Nature to a sound repose,*]
 “ Which sleeps, and never palates more the *dugg*,
 “ The beggar’s nurse and Cæsars.”

“ THAT *this line in books* (he adds) *was the substance of that lost*, is evident from its making sense of all the rest ; which are to this effect : It is great to do that which frees us from all the accidents of humanity, *lulls our over-wearied nature to repose*, (which now sleeps and has no more appetite for worldly enjoyments) and is equally the nurse of Cæsar and the beggar.”

WOULD your Lordship desire better
 sympathy

sympathy than this? Whether Shakspeare, when he told Lord Southampton that “gratitude cherishes sweet *nature*, and *lulls* the calm breast *to soft repose*,” foresaw what would occur to Dr. Warburton a hundred and fifty years afterwards; or the Doctor dived into the poet’s bosom, and there found that sentiment which has lain so long concealed in the bottom of an old trunk; which ever way this marvellous coincidence is viewed, it reflects the highest honour on the sagacity of one or the other: but whether the laurel crown is to be adjudged to the poet or the commentator, I shall not presume to determine.

IT is not necessary to take notice of any other part of this Letter, except the conclusion, which is completely modern: “O excuse me, mye Lorde, more at presente I cannotte.”

Yours devotedlye and with due respecte.”

ALMOST every word here deserves to be particularly attended to. Though “*no more at present*” might pass well enough in a modern epistle, however spurious, it will not do here. The phrase of the time was

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not

not “ at present,” but, “ at *this present* ;”¹⁰⁰ and—“ with due respecte” is equally modern, and equally objectionable. There is a fashion in the style, and particularly in the conclusion, of Letters, as in most other things. As the writer of the present day assures his correspondent that he is his *faithful*, or *affectionate*, or *obedient servant*, (as the case may be,) so, in the times we are now treating of, the mode between equals was—“ Your Lordships assuredly,” or “ Your good Lordships assured loving friend,” or “ your Lordships most assured to comande,” or “ your assured frende to do you service :”—and from an inferior the customary expressions were—“ Your honours most humbly at comandente ;”—or “ Your good lordships most readie in all service ;” or “ Your honours most assured and ready to be used ;” or “ Your honours most humbly to use and commande ;” or “ Your honours most humble poore frende, assured, and at comandement.”¹⁰¹—Such, I say,

¹⁰⁰ “ And many a man there is, even at *this present*,—”

WINTER'S TALE.

“ Thy letters have transported me beyond

“ *This ignorant present* ;—” MACBETH.

¹⁰¹ SYDNEY and SHREWSBURY PAPERS, *passim*.

The

say, were the modes of those days, of which our fabricator appears to have been completely ignorant.—Whenever any example shall be produced of a person in so low a situation as that of a player was then esteemed to be, presuming to conclude a letter to a nobleman with the modern familiar assurance of attachment—“ YOURS,” and of his adding also that he is *devotedly* attached to the person thus addressed, (a word certainly used in the same sense in that age, but which I have not found in the conclusion of letters, though at a subsequent period it became common,) and when all the other absurdities and incongruities of this Letter are also done away, then may it pass for the composition of our poet; “ but in such a *then* I write a *never*.”

PERMIT me now to take a view of Lord Southampton’s Answer to this epistle.

The writer might also have found an apt conclusion for this fabrication, in a Letter from Sir John Harrington to the Lord Treasurer Burghley, *NUGÆ ANTIQ.* ii. 84; “ In all dutie I reste your humble well-wisher:”—but he appears to have been as little acquainted with the writings as the manners of the time.

HENRY, the third earl of Southampton, was born October 6, 1573;¹⁰² so that he was not twenty years old, when our poet selected him for his patron by the dedication of his earliest poem. It is not necessary for me here to enter minutely into his history; nor do I wish to anticipate my future work by stating the circumstances which led our poet to place himself under the patronage of this nobleman, or which shew how well he merited the encomiums that Shakspeare has bestowed upon him. At once accomplished, literate, brave, and liberal, all the poets and artists of the time looked up to him as their protector. Whatever donation he gave to Shakspeare, it is highly probable that it was given in return for his dedications, according to the established practice of that age. This circumstance would fix the date of the Letter before us to 1594. Let us, however, suppose it to have been written either then or at any subsequent period that its partisans may choose to fix upon, previous to the death of the poet in 1616. Lord Southampton was then in his forty third year.

¹⁰² Esc. 24 Eliz. p. 1. n. 46.

To pass over the Orthography, (which is not only not that of Lord Southampton, as we shall presently see, but not the orthography of any age whatsoever,) and to come to the Phraseology, the first badge of literary fraud in this piece is found *in limine*;—“DEARE Willam.” I will not take up your Lordship’s time on this inauspicious commencement, which every one, at all acquainted with the manners of that day, knows was not the language of a nobleman to a person at the immeasurable distance at which Shakspeare stood from Lord Southampton. Had he condescended to write to our poet, he would without doubt have begun with “Mr. Shakspeare,” or “Good Master Shakspeare,” or “Good William;”¹⁰³ or some other similar form.—The christian name, William, was sometimes at that

¹⁰³ So, in the Queen’s Letter already given,—“I thanke you, *Good Harry*,” &c. So also, Lord Essex, writing to his dependant, Mr. Combe, in 1599, (Harrington’s *Nugæ Antiq.* ii. 8.) “*Good Thomas*.”—And Lord Burghley to Mr. (afterwards,) Sir John Harrington, when a boy at Cambridge, in 1578: “I thancke you, *my good Jacke*, for your lettres,” &c. *Ibid.* p. 282.—See also SYDNEY PAPERS, i. 389, Sir Philip Sydney to Edward Waterhouse, (28th April, 1578,)—“*My good Ned*, never since yow wente,” &c.

period,

period, as now, written contractedly, W^m, as Shakspeare himself has once written it: but the more ordinary abbreviation was Willm̄; which I have found in several hundred papers of the age of Elizabeth, and is employed by our poet in his will. *Willam*, as here given, is the pronunciation of a vulgar illiterate female of the present day.

LORD Southampton's telling Shakspeare, whom he is here absurdly made to call his dearest *freynd*, (which, by the way, we shall presently find was neither his mode of spelling the latter word, nor the spelling of the age,) that he had *offered him double the sum*, will naturally remind your Lordship of those inartificial soliloquies on the stage, where a gentleman is introduced very gravely telling himself a long story, of which the poet wishes the audience to be informed. But it was quite necessary here; for though Shakspeare knew of this generous offer, how should the reader have known any thing of it, if the patron had not reminded the poet of his own liberality? and the words—"double the somme," and "you woulde accepte butte the halfe," leave the matter involved in that mist of uncertainty and

and obscurity, which on this occasion was so desirable, for the reason I have already stated.

BUT I hasten to the conclusion:—"As I have beene thye freynde, soe will I continue aughte thatte I canne doe forre thee: praye, commande mee, and you shalle fynde mee Yours, Southampton."

HERE, in the true style of Mr. BAYS, we have "flash for flash, and dash for dash." As the poet concludes with the most familiar assurance of regard, (*Yours,*) the patron will not be outdone by him, and adopts the same mode; scorning the ordinary forms of—"Your assured well-wisher," or "Your ready friend to do you service," &c. as trite and vulgar.—The preceding words, "Pray, command me," (to say nothing of their modern air, when thus used imperatively,) considered as the language of a nobleman to a player, harmonize perfectly well with the rest of this spurious epistle.

BUT the signature, "Southampton," requires a more minute examination. This
circum-

circumstance, and Lord Leycester's being mentioned in the Queen's pretended Letter addressed to Shakspeare as master of a company of comedians, of which I was informed soon after this wonderful discovery was announced, gave me a perfect insight into the nature and quality of these manuscripts. In the reign of Elizabeth, as your Lordship knows, noblemen in their signatures usually prefixed their christian name to their titles ; as their ladies, and my lords the Bishops, do at this day. This, I say, was the ordinary practice, though a few peers deviated from that mode, and subscribed their titles only ; as they now do universally. In the time of James the First, the general mode continued the same, though it was then also occasionally departed from ; and in the time of his successor the present mode seems to have prevailed rather more than the other, though it was not generally established till after the Restoration. But whatever examples of the modern practice may occasionally be found in ancient times, Henry Lord Southampton prefixed his christian name to his title ; a practice which seems to have been hereditary in his family ; for the autograph of his father (H.

South-

Southampton) is in the Museum;¹⁰⁴ and his son, the Lord Treasurer, even some years after the Restoration, (June 26, 1666,) signed T. Southampton, as appears from an autograph in my possession. This circumstance therefore, even if it stood alone, would be fatal to this spurious epistle.

NOTHING more now remains on this part of my subject, but to prove what I have asserted, by producing two Letters written by Lord Southampton, the only Letters of his known to be extant;¹⁰⁵ which, while they ascertain this point, will shew

¹⁰⁴ MS. COTTON. Titus. B. vii. Letter the fourth, dated July 26, 1572. This Nobleman, who wrote a very good hand, formed his autograph, (as was much the fashion formerly,) so as to make the first letter of *Southampton* serve for half of the initial letter of his christian name (Henry). This was a common practice in the last century. Antony Wood almost always, in writing the initials of his christian and surname, made the second stroke of the A serve as the first of the W.

¹⁰⁵ Mr. Astle very obligingly, at my request, searched the State-Paper Office, with the hope of finding some other specimens of Lord Southampton's hand-writing; but in vain. I had also hoped to have found some of his Letters among the papers belonging to the Ordnance-Office; but was there also disappointed.

that not one word of this nobleman's handwriting had ever been seen by the fabricator of the Letter before us, in which the miserable scrawl of a paralytick man of fourscore is attributed to a young peer probably of one and twenty, but certainly not more than forty-two.

THE first of these Letters, which I found near a year ago in the Museum, (MSS. Harl. 7000, p. 46,) has no date, but was written to the Lord Keeper in the latter end of July, 1621. In the parliament which met January 30, 1620-21, Lord Southampton took a very active part; and in a debate on the 14th of March, relative to an illegal patent granted to Sir Giles Mompeyson, the profits of which were shared by Sir Edward Villiers, he called the Duke of Buckingham to order, for speaking twice on the same subject; which created such confusion in the House, that the Prince of Wales thought it proper to interpose, and reconciled them.¹⁰⁶ This reconciliation, however,

¹⁰⁶ Camden. Regn. Reg. Jacob. ANNAL. p. 69. 4to. 1691.—According to the Parliamentary History, this altercation happened on the 22d of March. "A debate arising

however, should seem not to have been very sincere on the part of the minister ; for on the 16th of June he caused Lord Southampton to be taken into close custody,¹⁰⁷ and confined under the care of the Dean of Westminster (Dr. Williams), who in the following month was made Bishop of Lincoln, and Lord Keeper of the great Seal, in the

arising in what manner to proceed against the said Sir Giles, whether by indictment in that house or otherwise ; and there being some confusion amongst the Speakers, the Prince of Wales, who constantly attended this business morning and afternoon, made a motion, ‘That by the ancient orders of the House no Lord was to speak twice, though to explain himself, except some other Lord mistake his meaning in any part of his speech.’ This was commanded to be entered, and ordered to be observed.”
 PARL. HIST. v. 371.

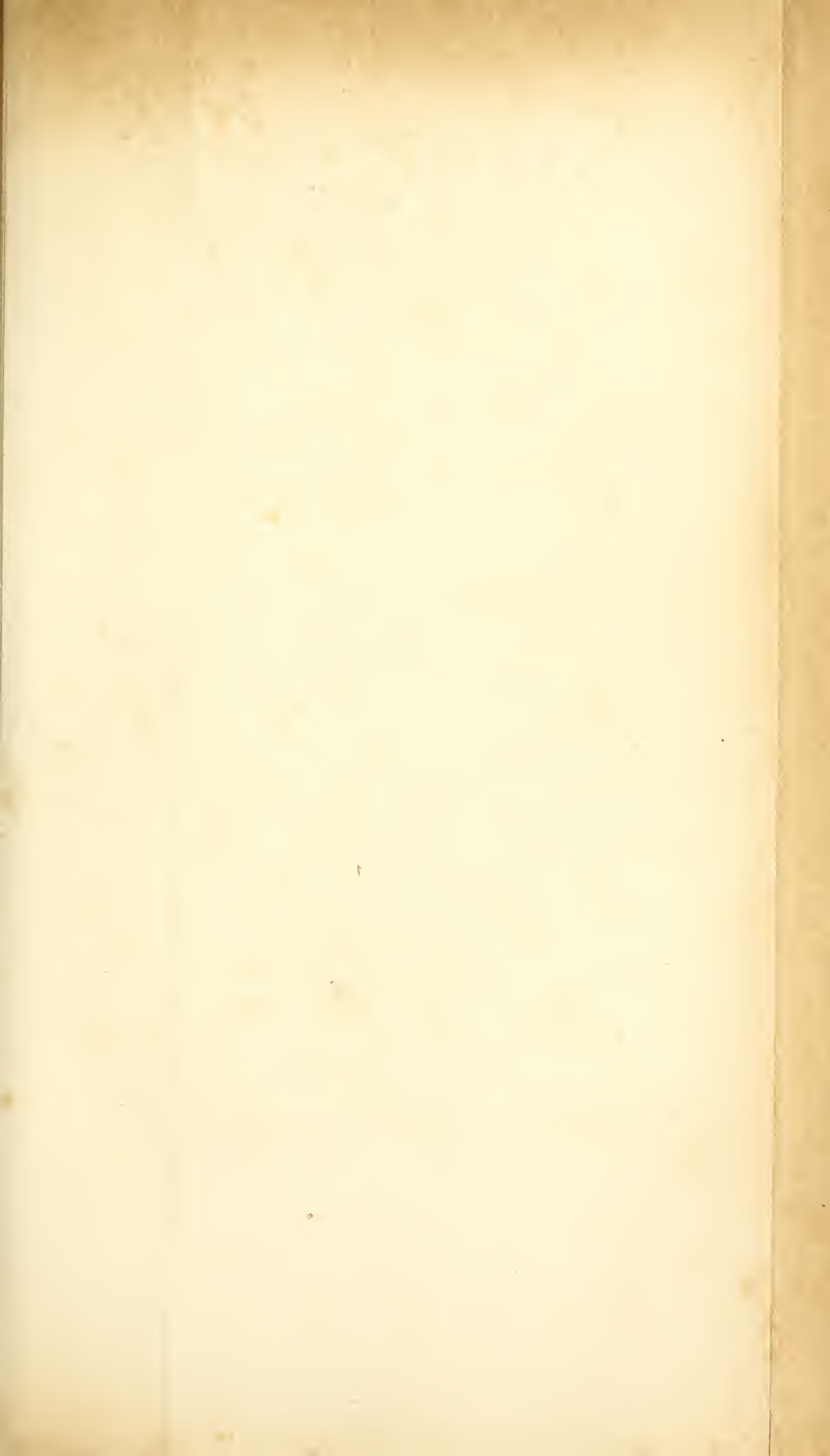
¹⁰⁷ Camden. *ut supr.* p. 72. The altercation however in March was not the only cause of Lord Southampton’s being taken into custody, as appears from his Examination, preserved in the Museum, (MSS. Harl. 161. art. 8.) and published by Mr. Tyrwhitt, at the end of the DEBATES of the HOUSE OF COMMONS in 1621, 8vo. 1766. Two of the questions put to him were these: “Whether in the time of Parliament some of the lower House did not usually come up into the Committee-chamber of the upper House, upon design and plot to receive a direction from him what to do in their House?”—“Whether he did not say, they had like to come to blows?” ANSWER. “He said, that he saw that heat in the House, that, if the Prince had not been there, they had like to have come to blows.”

room of Bacon, who had been degraded on the 2d of May. On the 18th of July, Lord Southampton was liberated from his confinement in the house of the Lord Keeper,¹⁰⁸ but was not suffered to appear at court, being commanded to retire to his country-house at Tichfield. In the latter end of that month he wrote the following Letter¹⁰⁹ to the Lord Keeper, Williams:¹¹⁰

“ My

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.* p. 73.

¹⁰⁹ This Letter is very inaccurately printed in the *CABALA*, p. 359, edit. 1663, where also is the Lord Keeper's answer, dated August 2, 1621. On the preceding day he had written to the Duke of Buckingham in favour of Lord Southampton. “ This enclosed (says the Bishop) will let your lordship understand, that somewhat is to be finished in that excellent piece of mercy which his Majesty (your hand guiding the pencil) is about to express to the earl of Southampton. It is full time his attendant were revoked, in my poor opinion, and himself left to the custody of his own good angel.”—*CABAL.* p. 285. On the 22d of July, he thus expresses himself in a letter to the same person: “ With my truest affection and thankfulness premised, I do not doubt but his Majesty and your Lordship do now enjoy the general applause of your goodness to the Earl of Southampton. Saturday last he came and dined with me, and I find him more cordially affected to the service of the King, and your Lordship's love and friendship, then ever he was, when he lay a prisoner in my house. Yet the sunshine of his Majesties favour, though most
bright



N^o XXII.
Part of Lord Southampton's
Pretended Letter.

Dear Sir

I have the pleasure to hear
of your recovery and to
be assured that you are
now in a better way of
recovery than you were
some time ago.

Your
Obedt^o Servant

J. Southamton

My Sir

I have found your letter already so
favorable to affectionate wishes made that
I shall be still heartier desirous to acquiesce
in what comes in my way and would be
your adviser of counsel, &c.

N^o XXIII.
M.S.S. Harl.
7000. p. 46.

Your most affectionate friend to see you revive
J. Southamton

To the right honorable
my Lord good to the
Ed. Request of the great
Seal of England

N^o XXIV.
In Bibl. Cotton.
Vesp. F.XIII. p. 311.

I have sent you herewith a petition
I delivered on behalf of me in the behalf of cer-
tain poor men dwelling at Gosport
who have been hardly used by the
wardens &c.

I wish

the 17 of Octob

Your affectionate friend
J. Southamton

“ My Lo :

“ I HAVE found your lo: alreedy so favorable & affectionate unto mee that I shall bee still hereafter desirous to acquaint you wth what concernes mee, & bould to aske your advice & counsell, which makes mee now send this bearer to give your lo: an account of my answer from Court, w^{ch} I cannot better doe then by sendinge unto you the answer it self, w^h you shall receive heere enclosed, wherin you may see what is expected from mee that I must not only magnifie his ma^{ties} gracious dealings with mee, but cause all my frendes to doe the lyke, & restrayne them from makinge any extenuation of my errors, w^h if they be disposed to doe or

bright upon others (more open offenders), is noted to be somewhat eclipsed towards him. What directions soever his Majesty gave, the order is somewhat tart upon the Earl. The word *Confinement* spread about the city, though I observed not one syllable so quick to fall from his Majesty, his Keeper much wondered at. The act of the Council [was] published in our names, who were neither present thereat, nor heard any word of the same: yet upon my credit the Earl takes all things patiently, and thankfully, though others wonder at the same.” *IBID.* p. 283.

¹¹⁰ See Plate III. N^o. xxiii. where a *fac-simile* of part of it is given.

not

not to doe is impossible for mee to alter, that am not lykely for a good time to see any other then my owne famely. for my self I shall euer be ready as is fitt to acknowledge his ma^{ties} favor to mee, but can hardly perswade my self that any error by mee cōmitted deserved more punishment then I haue had, & hope his Ma^{ty} will not expect that I should confess my self to have beene subject to a starchamber sentence, w^h God forbidd I should euer doe. I haue & shall doe accordinge to that part of my lo: of Buckingams aduise to speake as little of it as I can, & so shall doe in other thinges to meddle as little as I can. I purpose God willinge to goe to-morow to Tichfield the place of my confinement, there to stay as long as the Kinge shall please. Sir Will. Parkurst^{'''} must goe wth mee, who hoped to [have] been discharged at the returne of my messenger from Court, & seames much troubled that hee is not, pertendinge that it is extreeme inconuenient for him in regard of his owne occations. hee is fear-

^{'''} Sir William Parkurst was the *attendant* mentioned by the Lord Keeper in his Letter to the Duke of Buckingham. See n. 107.

full least hee should bee forgotten, if there. Wherefore when your lo: writes to the Court, if you would putt my lo: of Buckingham in remembrance of it, you shall I thinke doe him a favor. for my part it is so little troble to mee & of so small moment, as I mean to move no more for it; when this bearer returns I beseech you returne by him this enclosed l̄r, & beleeue that whatsoever I am I will ever bee your lo:

most assured frend to doe you seruice

H Southampton."¹¹²

THE following Letter, written by the same nobleman, of part of which a *fac-simile* is also given,¹¹³ was obligingly pointed out to me by Mr. Planta of the Museum. It has no date but that of

¹¹² Lord Southampton, not having room to conclude this letter at the bottom of the page, was obliged to turn the paper, and to write the words—"ever bee," &c. on the side margin; in consequence of which, having very little space for his name, he wrote it in a smaller size, and could not make the first stroke of the letter H in what appears from his other autograph to have been his ordinary manner. See the signatures, Plate III. N^o. xxiii. and xxiv.

¹¹³ BRIT. MUS. MS. Cotton. F. xiii. p. 311.—See Plate III. N^o. xxiv.

“ the 17 of october ;” nor have I been able to discover the undertaking alluded to, in which Lord Chandos was engaged, and which might serve to ascertain the date ; but Grey, Lord Chandos, the person here meant, (who was commonly called the KING OF COTSWOLD,) having died at Sudeley in Gloucestershire, on the 10th of August, 1621,¹¹⁴ this Letter must have been dated in some year between October 1620 and the accession of King James to the English throne.

“ I HAVE sent you heerewith a petition delivered unto mee in the behalf of certayne poore men dwellinge att Gosport who have been hardly used by *winter*,¹¹⁵ who under coller of beeinge Captayne of

¹¹⁴ Esc. 19 Jac. p. 1. n. 103.—Camden says in his Annals of King James, that Lord Chandos died at Spa in Germany, Aug. 5, 1621 ; but the Inquisition which was taken at Winchcombe in Gloucestershire, close to his house, Jan. 11, 1621-2, shews that the Annalist was misinformed. George, the eldest son of Grey, Lord Chandos, (who had succeeded to the title in 1602,) was only one year and one day old at his father's death.

¹¹⁵ Perhaps a descendant of William Winter, Esq. who (as appears from Forbes's STATE PAPERS) was much employed in the early part of Queen Elizabeth's reign in furnishing the Navy with Ordnance stores.

the Kinges Pinnace hath comitted mayny insolences ; as also a noate of divers other his misdeamenors, wth the neglect of his duty & charge ; all w^{ch} & much more (as I am informed) will be proued against him, if it will please my Lo. Priuy Seale to appointe some to examin the parties that complayne, and some other dwellinge thereabouts, who will bee redy to iustify these thinges and more ; but they beeinge poore men would bee utterly undoone if they should goe to London, to bee examined. Wherfore, my lo. weare best to appoint any who hee shall thinke fitt, to take their examinations heere in the contry. My lo: Shandos hath fayled, for I heare no newes of him, & am therefore uncertayne of my cominge into the playnes,¹¹⁶ but if I come you shall heare from mee, otherwiss I hope wee shall meete att your returne ; till when wishinge you good sport I rest

your assured frend

“ the 17 of Octob.” H Southampton.”

¹¹⁶ Probably Salisbury Plains.—In the preceding part of this letter in p. 192, (which is on a different sheet,) an error happened at the press, which I did not discover till the sheet was worked off. For *coller*, the original has *collor* ; and for *have*, we should twice read *haue*.

THESE Letters require no comment or observation. One glance on the plate where *fac-similes* of both of them are given, will at once establish the spuriousness of the pretended correspondence between this nobleman and our poet. There are some peculiarities in Lord Southampton's hand-writing; one of which is his formation of the letter *f*, in which he is uniform throughout;—but neither this circumstance, nor his using the letter *u* where we should now write *v*, (as was common at that time,) nor his signature, nor the orthography of both these genuine letters, though totally varying from the modern-antique exhibited in a former page, (where we find the *r* used in the old chancery-hand, *notte*, *forre*, &c.) none of these, I say, are wanting to prove what the entire dissimilitude of the hand-writing ascertains beyond a doubt, —that the whole is “false and hollow,” a miserable, bungling, nonsensical forgery.¹¹⁷

VIII. SHAK-

¹¹⁷ I cannot dismiss this part of my subject without laying before my readers the following observation, as a *literary curiosity*:

“The comparison of signatures is not always satisfactory proof of authenticity, on account of diversities which
occur

VIII. SHAKSPEARE'S PROFESSION OF FAITH.

ON the PROFESSION OF FAITH, which is the next article of this extraordinary Miscellany,

occur in the same person's writing at different times. In the British Museum are to be seen three signatures, *unaccompanied by any date*, of the Earls of Southampton; one of the father, and two said to be of the son, the friend of Shakspeare: the two latter on comparison appear to be widely different from each other, and from Mr. Ireland's MSS. [With respect to the assertion that Lord Southampton's two signatures differ widely from each other, the reader has only to cast his eye on Pl. III. to be convinced that it is wholly unfounded. They differ only in *size*. The cause is assigned in p. 191, n. 112.]

“ In general, however, (proceeds this writer,) signatures, though agreeing perhaps upon the *whole*, have some individual distinctions more or less minute, according to the different circumstances which may have affected them.”
COMPARATIVE REVIEW, &c. p. 26.

As it has been very generally known that specimens of Lord Southampton's genuine hand-writing were speedily to be produced, it is not unreasonable to suppose that the foregoing observation was made with a view of meeting with this evidence, and diminishing its force by anticipation.

Let us then see what kind of illustration the subject may derive from this remark. In examining affidavits, which are frequently made by the contending parties in the course of legal proceedings, Judges make it a rule to throw out of their consideration every thing that is irrelevant to the question before them, to use legal language, or in plain English, nothing to the purpose. If such a process were used here, I fear the residue would be a mere *caput mortuum*. For

Miscellany, I have very little to say. There being no note of time to ascertain when it was

what is the state of the question?—A Letter is produced pretending to be the hand-writing of Henry Lord Southampton, the patron of Shakspeare, but exhibiting the scrawl of a man drunk or paralytick. To this are opposed two genuine letters of the same nobleman, in a fair, regular hand, and no more resembling the forged scrawl than Chinese characters resemble English.—What is the Answer? It is not precisely in the words of Fluellen—“There is a river in Macedon, and there is also moreover a river at Monmouth,—and there is salmons in both ;” but the reasoning is nearly as good. “There is a signature in the Museum, written by Henry Lord Southampton the father, [and it might have been added, *in a strong, free, and fair hand, July 26, 1572,*] and two by the son [*equally fair, and differing from each other only in size*], and all totally differing from the pretended letter. *Ergo*, the pretended letter may be genuine, *because* signatures, though agreeing on the whole, have minute and individual distinctions.”—If the foregoing deduction be not intended to be drawn, I know not what the writer had in view. The concluding paragraph I do not well understand, but suppose it was meant to support and strengthen what went before.

I do not conceive that on a question of evidence this reasoning would appear quite satisfactory to my lords the Judges in Westminster Hall ; and, though only an adopted son, I have so high a respect for the University of OXFORD, that I cannot suppose any such logick is taught by that learned body in their Schools. Certain it is, that neither Crakanthorp, Wallis, or Aldrich, furnish any examples of it. It is not, however, wholly without precedent ; for I

am

was written, no argument can be grounded on its date. The same objections, however, founded on the orthography, the language and phraseology, and the dissimilitude of the hand-writing to that of the person to whom it is ascribed, lie to this paper as to all the former.

I HAVE already had occasion to observe that several of these fictions were founded on, and grew out of, either tra-

am told that several instances of this species of argument are to be found in the *DIALECTICKS* of *PIGROGROMITUS*, (a well-known sciolist of the sixteenth century,) which were translated into English from the original Vapian language by a great admirer of his, Sir Topas, a country curate, of Queubus near Leeds in Yorkshire, and published in 1590, by John Trundle, Stationer in Barbican, at the Sign of No-BODY. This tract consists of two hundred pages, or 3980 lines (the lines being *numbered* throughout, and twenty lines in every page but the first and the last): It is of such extreme rarity, that no copy of it is known to be extant, except one said to have been lately discovered in Shakspeare's library, which is proved beyond all question to have belonged to our incomparable poet, by his having written his name in it exactly *SIX HUNDRED TIMES*, that is, on the top and bottom and side margin of every page, with all the variety and diversity that the most wanton caprice could dictate. In the last leaf, there being a vacant space, he observes that he and his friend Cowley, the player, had many a hearty laugh over the paralogisms in this book.

ditional

ditional stories concerning our author, or papers which had previously appeared in the account of his Life. The Profession of Faith before us was manifestly formed on a Confession of Faith written by one John Shakspeare, which I published for the first time in the end of the year 1790.¹¹⁸ It was found about the year 1770, by one Mosely, a master bricklayer, who usually worked with his men, being employed by Mr. Thomas Hart, (the fifth descendant in a direct line from our poet's sister, Joan Hart,) to new-tile the old house in Stratford, in which Shakspeare, on no good authority, is supposed to have been born. The paper was discovered between the rafters and the tiling of the house; and the evidence respecting its authenticity transmitted to me by my friend the Rev. Dr. Davenport, Vicar of Stratford-upon-Avon, appeared to me sufficiently satisfactory to warrant its publication. But in my conjecture concerning the writer of that paper, I certainly was mistaken; for I have since obtained documents that clearly prove it could not have

¹¹⁸ PLAYS and POEMS of WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE, 1750. Vol. H. P. II. p. 162, and p. 330.

been the composition of any one of our poet's family; as will be fully shewn in his Life.

HOWEVER, here was a ground to work on; and accordingly we have before us a second and similar paper, the fabricator of which does not seem to have once reflected how extremely improbable it would appear that *all* the Shakspeare family should be CONFESSORS of their FAITH.

OF this mystical rhapsody I shall only quote a few passages, adhering closely to the absurd orthography that has been employed. It begins thus :

“ I BEYNGE nowe off sounde Mynde doe hope that this mye wyshe wille atte mye deathe be ACCEEDED toe.” “ - - - I doe fyrste looke toe oune lovyng and great God ande toe his gloriouse sonne Jesus I doe alsoe beleyve thatte thys mye weake ande frayle Bodye wille returne to duste but *forre* my soule lette God judge that as to *bymselfe* shalle seeme meete.”

- - - - whenne the teares offe sweete repentance bathe hys *wretched* pillowe - - -

“ O Manne,

“ O Manne, - - - where are thye greate
 thye boasted attrIBUTES buried loste forre
 everre inne colde Death - - - more thou
 attempteste more arte thou loste till the
 poore weake thoughtes arre elevated toe
 theyre summite ande thence assnowe fromme
 the leffee tree ¹¹⁹ droppe ande distylle them-
 selves till they are noe more - - - -

“ - - - greate God receyve me toe thye
 bosomme where alle is sweete contente ande
 happynesse alle is blysse

“ - - - O cherishe usse like the sweete
 Chickenne thatte under the coverte offe herre
 spreadynge Wings Receyves herre lyttle
 Broode &c.”

THIS last passage has evidently been
 formed on Holy Writ,¹²⁰ where the kind-
 ness

¹¹⁹ It has been justly observed, that this epithet is unfor-
 tunate, trees being generally denuded of their foliage when
 snow falls. Letter to George Steevens, Esq. &c. by James
 Boaden, Esq. p. 44.

¹²⁰ “ O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, - - - how often would I
 have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth
 her chickens under her wings, and ye would not.”

ST. MATTHEW, xxiii. 37.

“ —O thou that savest by thy right hand them which put
 their

ness and pity of our merciful Creator are represented under the familiar image of a hen protecting her little brood under her wings. But whence the absurd introduction of a *chicken*, (which is here by courtesy to pass for the mother bird,) to perform this parental office? Whence, but from the same caprice and refinement of folly which dictated his *Grace* of Southampton, and twenty other fooleries, which it was supposed would give an air of originality to the whole, on the principle that a *forgery* would not have so departed from verisimilitude; and that therefore the conclusion that the MSS. were genuine would necessarily follow; for in this fabricator's mind, absurdity and authenticity seem to have been terms precisely synonymous and equipollent.

IT is observable, that in this paper the poet deserts the old *r* used in the chancery-hand, of which he was before so prodigal, and which is presented to us in every page of

their trust in thee, from those that rise up against them, keep me as the apple of the eye, *hide me under the shadow of thy wings.*" PSALM xvii. 8.

"He shall *cover* thee with his feathers, and under his *wings* shalt thou trust." PSALM xci. 4.

the factitious copy of KING LEAR. Without, however, resting on the hand-writing, or the orthography, (which is of no age,) The “ *wretched* pillow,” and the modern duplication without a connecting particle,—“ buried, lost,”—“ all is sweete contente, alle is blysse,” &c. might enable any reasonable man to form a decided opinion upon it : but when I have added that the word *hymsselfe* is exhibited in this pretended ancient MS. as one word,¹²¹ and that the word ACCEDED is found in it, I conceive it would be a perfect waste of time to detain your lordship any longer on this head.

THE word *accede* Dr. Johnson supposed to have been originally a diplomatick word, and it is of so recent an origin that no example of it is found in his Dictionary. It came into use, I believe, within the present century ; and was probably employed in State-papers and parliamentary speeches, before it became a word of ordinary use. It is unnecessary here to refer to Barrett, Bullokar, Minshieu, or any of our elder lexicographers. It is remarkable that Edward Philips, Milton’s nephew, who was a good scholar,

¹²¹ See p. 80.

as appears by his Latin Treatise on Dramatick Poetry,¹²² has not this word in his Dictionary, though he has the kindred word *concede*; and what shews decisively that the word did not exist when he published his book, (1659,) is, that he mentions and explains the two law-writs, *Accedas ad Curiam*, and *Accedas ad Vice-comitem*; so that he could not possibly have over-looked the English word *accede*, had it been then in use. This is decisive. Its non-existence

¹²² An anonymous Annotator on Dr. Johnson's Life of Milton, as exhibited in the collection of his works, supposed that the Biographer was in an error when he described Philips as the author of "a small History of Poetry written in Latin," and that he had mistaken his THEATRUM POETARUM, (which is written in English, and is only a list of poets Ancient and Modern, with a short account of their works,) for a Latin Treatise. But the Annotator is himself in an error, and Dr. Johnson was perfectly correct. Philips's treatise, of which I have a copy, is entitled, *Tractatulus de Carmine Dramatico Poetarum Veterum, præsertim in Choris tragicis et veteris comædiæ. Cui subjungitur compendiosa enumeratio poetarum (saltem quorum fama maxime enituit) qui a tempore Dantis Aligerii usque ad hunc ætatem claruerunt, &c.* He published another short Latin tract in 4to. entitled *Tractatulus de modo et ratione formandi voces derivativas Linguæ Latinæ, &c.* of which I have never seen a copy except that in the Bodleian Library.

is further confirmed by Coles' Latin Dictionary, 1679, who thus interprets the word *Accedo*: "To come, approach, resemble, *assent*, to be added, increased, included in." Here we do not find *accede*, an unquestionable proof that the word was then unknown. Blount in the fifth edition of his *GLOSSOGRAPHIA*, (1681,) though professing to "interpret the *hard words* of whatever language now used in our English tongue," has it not; neither is it found in so late a book as Kersey's English Dictionary, 1708.—We have here therefore a word unknown to our language for near a century after the death of the person by whom it is pretended to have been used. If this be not a decisive proof of forgery, I know not what has a title to be considered as one.

EVEN the French, who perhaps adopted this word from the Latin before us, had it not in Shakspeare's time, for it is not noticed by Cotgrave in 1611, nor by Howel or Sherwood in 1650; so that probably it was introduced even among them, after the Restoration.

IX. X. XI. A LETTER FROM SHAK-
SPEARE TO RICHARD COWLEY, &c.

THE piece next presented to us in this Miscellany, is a pretended Letter from Shakspeare to Richard Cowley, a low actor who played the part of Verges in MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING; and who, if we are to credit these papers, was our poet's bosom friend. Like the greater part of these fictions, it (very prudently) has no date, except *Marche nyntbe*. In this epistle Shakspeare says to his *worthye freynde*,—"Havinge alwaye accountedde thee a Pleasaynte ande *wittyte* Personne and oune whose Companye I doe muche esteeme I have sente thee inclosedde a *whymsycalle* conceyte." - - - I do not think it necessary to proceed any further.

WIT, in our author's time, being the general term for the intellectual powers, a *witty* person then signified either a man of cunning and shrewdness, or one of sound understanding, of considerable intellectual endowments; not, as it is here used, a man of
lively

lively fancy or imagination. Thus Buckingham is characterised by Richard, as “ the deep-revolving, *witty* Buckingham.”¹²³

THE *whymscalle* conceit will demand a more particular examination. WHIM, according to Dr. Johnson, “ is derived by Skinner, from a thing turning round, nor can I (adds that lexicographer) find any etymology more probable.” But there is here certainly some mistake; for Skinner seems to think that the word *whimzy* (he has not *whim*,) comes from the French *Quint*, originally a fifth in musick, and afterwards used metaphorically, as Cotgrave has stated, for “ a fantastick humour or veine, a foolish giddinesse of the braine.” Skinner’s etymology is surely very far-fetched. The English word WHIM in its present sense, without doubt was a mere contraction of

¹²³ So, in THE OVERTHROW OF STAGE PLAYES, 4to. 1599; Pref. “ Maister Dr. Gager is likewise, I understand, a *man of giftes*, a good *schollar*, and an honest man, and, (as it should seeme by Maister Rainoldes his severall aunsweres and replies,) hath saied more for the defense of plaies than can be well saied againe by any man that shall succede and come after him. So that the cause being thus *wittely* and *schollerlike* maintained,” &c. See also PLAYS and POEMS OF WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE, vol. vi. p. 561.

whim-wham,¹²⁴ a child's toy, which being of some fantastical form, (perhaps of the shape of a wind-mill,) gave birth to the secondary sense in which WHIM is used at this day. Though this secondary sense had come into use before Shakspeare's death,* the adjective WHIMSICAL, most assuredly, was not employed till long afterwards. Neither Bullokar, nor Minshieu in his first or second edition, nor Sherwood in 1650, nor Philips in his third edition in 1671, nor Blount, nor Skinner, have the word. It first appears in Coles' Latin Dictionary in 1679,¹²⁵ and Dr. Johnson could find among our English writers no authority for this word higher than Addison.

¹²⁴ See Cotgrave's *DICT.* 1611. "BABIOLÉ. A trifle, a *whim-wham*, guigaw, or small toy for a child to play with."

* *Whimsey* is used by B. JONSON, *VOLPONE*, (1607,) Act III. sc. i. (The quotation is Mr. Waldron's.)

"—— my most prosperous parts

"They do so spring and burgeon, [*germinate*] I can feele

"A *whimsey* in my blood."

¹²⁵ Coles seems to have derived his conception of this word from Skinner's definition of *whimzy*, for he renders it by *morosus*, and *whim* or *whimzy* by "*Morositas; impetus morosus et anomalus; chimæra.*"

He has likewise *whim-wham*, but its original meaning (a child's toy) seems to have been forgotten, and it had assumed a new signification. Coles' interpretation of this word is—*fabulæ; nugæ aniles.*

A COLLATERAL proof of its non-existence may be drawn from the French and Italian Dictionaries of our poet's time. The French words now ordinarily used to express what we call *whimsical*, are *fantastique*, *capricieux*, *bizarre*; the Italian, *capricioso*, *fantastico*, *ghiribizzoso*. Had the word *whimsical* been then known, unquestionably under one or other of these words it would have been found. But *fantastique* is interpreted by Cotgrave in 1611, "fantasticall, humorous, new-fangled, giddie, skittish, invented, conceited. *Capricieux*, "capricious, humorous, fantasticall, conceited, giddie-headed." *Bizarre* is explained by "fantasticall, toyish, odde, humorous, giddie-headed, selfe-conceited, haire-brained; also divers or diversified in fashion or in colour." Thus also Florio in his Italian Dictionary, 1611: "*Capricioso*, humorous, fantasticall, toyish, conceited, wavering in minde."—" *Fantasia*, A fantasy, a humour, a conceit."—" *Fantastico*, fantasticall, humorous." " *Ghiribizzoso*, humorous, fantasticall, full of sudden toyes or humours."—I may add, that in Howel's improved edition of Cotgrave's book in 1650, all the same definitions appear, without any addition.

So

So much for this rare and “*whymyscalle* conceyte,” which is addressed “To Masterre Richard Cowleye dwellynge atte *oune* ¹²⁶ Masterre Holliss a draperre inne the Watlynge Streete Londonne.” The “inclosedde conceyte” is indeed most truly whimsical, being a miserable drawing of our poet done by himself with a pen, from Martin Droeshout’s print of him engraved seven years after his death, and prefixed to the first folio edition of his works. Could any thing be devised more novel and truly whimsical than this? Lest there should be any doubt on this subject, the inventor and fabricator of this ingenious conceit has taken care that the light should fall, in the drawing, on the narrow side of the face, as it does in Droeshout’s print, as well as in the Chandos picture; otherwise the likeness might have escaped him, and our author might have lost the credit to which he is entitled for being able, in addition to all his other great powers, to delineate himself after he was dead. ¹²⁷

XII. A

¹²⁶ *Oune* for *one* is the spelling of no time whatsoever: but amidst such a host of absurdities it is hardly worth notice.

¹²⁷ On the reverse of this portrait I expected to have found a group of loggerheads; but though Shakspeare says

XII. A DEED OF GIFT TO WILLIAM HENRY IRELAND.

HAVING now dispatched all the smaller fry, we come to the great “Triton of the minnows,” Master William Henry Ireland, a most expert swimmer, and one whom, if we are to give credit to this deed, our poet “wore in his heart of heart.” In plain language, we are presented with a deed of gift from William Shakspeare to his friend and neighbour in the Blackfriars, William Henry Ireland, as a reward for his having saved our poet from being drowned in the Thames.—But let our author speak for himself.

“ I WILLIAM Shakspeare of *Statford on*

in his letter to his friend Cowley, that if he should not be able to discover his whimsical conceit, he shall be set down in the poet’s table of loggerheads, neither group nor table is given : an omission much to be lamented, as the fabricator had here so fair an opportunity of furnishing us with what one of our modern Auctioneers would call a proper companion to the wooden exhibition at the other side.—Instead, however, of these, we have only a few scrawls, such as a boy of eight or nine years makes on the back of one of his exercises, when dismissed by his writing-master from his task.

Avon

Avon butt nowe livyng in London neare untoe a Yard calledd or knowne bye the name of Irelands yarde in the Blackfryars London," &c.

“ Whereas onne or abowte the thyrde daye of the laste monethe beyng the monethe of *Auguste* havynge withe mye goode freynde Masterre William Henrye Irelande ande otherres *taen boate* neare untowe myne house afowersayde wee didd purpose goynge *upp Thames* butte those thatte were soe to *conducte* us beyng muche toe merrye throughe Lyquorre theye did *upsette* oure fowresayde bayrge all butte *myeselfe* savedd *themselves* bye swimmyng for though the Waterre was deepe yette owre beyng close nygh toe shore made itte lyttel dyffyculte for them knowinge the fowersayde Arte Masterre William henrye Irelande notte seeynge mee dydd aske for mee, butte oune of the Companye dydd answerre thatte I was drownynge onn the whyche he pulledd off hys Jerrekynne and Jumpedd inn afterre mee withe much paynes he draggedd mee forthe I beyng then nearelye deade and soe he dydd save mye life and for the whyche I

doe herebye give hym as folowithe !!!¹²⁸
 fyrste mye writtenn Playe of Henrye fowrthe
 Henrye fyfthe Kyng John Kyng Leare as
 allsoe mye written Playe neverr yett im-
 pryntedd whych I have named kyng henry
 thyrde of Englande alle the profyts of the
 whych are whollye toe bee for sayde Ire-
 land ande atte hys deathe thenne toe hys
 fyrste Sonne namedd alsoe William henrye
 and atte hys deathe toe hys brother ande soe
 onne butte inn case of faylure of Issue thenne
 toe the nexte of kynn ande soe on for everre
 inn hys lyne. Ande I doe alsoe give untoe
 sayde Ireland the Sum of ten Pounds, as a
 preesaunte oute of the whyche I doe require
 hym toe buye oune Rynge as a remem-
 braunce.”—This very curious deed, we are
 afterwards told, was executed on the 25th
 of October, 1604.

IT has been a common practice with our
 English writers to borrow titles for their
 pieces from their predecessors. Thus we had
 a SHEPHERDS CALENDER long before Spen-
 cer's, and a TALE OF A TUB long before Swift
 produced his ingenious Allegory. But the

¹²⁸ So the original. See p. 231, n. 139.

piece before us is quite new ; and the thought certainly has not been derived from any other writer ancient or modern. If, however, the old Satire of *COCKE LORELLES BOTE*, printed by Wynken de Worde, or the later *TALE OF TWO SWANNES*, should ever again be reprinted, the *TALE OF A BOAT*, or *THE TALE OF THE SWAN OF AVON HALF DROWNED IN THAMES*, or by whatever other name it may be called, will make a most happy accompaniment to those rare pieces ; and the Collection may very properly be bound up with one of those *GARLANDS OF DELIGHT*, which were formerly sold for two or three pence, and may now be had at any of our principal booksellers for as many guineas.

THIS is the first deed that I have ever perused, (though I have examined not a few,) in which a story, with all its circumstances, was regularly told. It is, however, we must acknowledge a very pretty story, and almost as interesting as some of our modern novels.—The circumstance that demands our attention in the outset, is our author describing himself as living in the Blackfriars in October, 1604. It is manifest

fest from the licence granted May 19, 1603, to Shakspeare and others, (procured without doubt by the favour of the Earl of Southampton, for the grant was made twelve days after the King arrived in London, and three days after Lord Southampton's own pardon passed the seals,) that the King's Servants were not then possessed of the Blackfriars Theatre; for by that grant they are authorized—"the said comedies, tragedies, &c. to shew—as well within their *nowe usuall house* called the GLOBE, within our county of Surrey, as also within anie tounne halls," &c.¹²⁹ But in 1625, when they had been long in possession of the other theatre also, the words of the licence are—"the said comedies, &c. to shew as well within those *two* their most usuall houses called the GLOBE, within our county of Surrey, and their private houses situate within the precinct of the *black Fryers*, within our city of London," &c.¹³⁰ Even in April in the following year, they had not got possession of the theatre in the Blackfriars, where the children of the Revels had performed, till they were

¹²⁹ Pat. 1. Jac. p. 2. m. 4.

¹³⁰ Pat. 1. Car. p. 1. m. 5.

devested of it by the King's Servants ; for I have before me a Letter directed to the Lord Mayor of London, and to the Justices of the Peace in the Counties of Middlesex and Surrey, ordering them " to permit and suffer the three Companies of Plaiers to the King, Queene, and Prince, to exercise ther plaies in ther severall and usuall howses, the **GLOBE**, - - - the **FORTUNE**, - - - and the **CURTAIN**—." This paper being dated April 9th, 1604, it appears that Shakspeare's company were not then possessed of the play-house in Blackfriars ; but probably, in the winter of that year, and before the 24th of March, 1604-5, they purchased it ; for Marston's **MALECONTENT** appears to have been acted there some time in that winter.— We see from hence that Shakspeare had no motive to reside in the Blackfriars before this period. The truth indeed, I believe, is, that he never resided in the Blackfriars at all. From a paper now before me, which formerly belonged to Edward Alleyn, the player, our poet appears to have lived in Southwark, near the Bear-Garden, in 1596. Another curious document in my possession, which will be produced in the History of his Life, affords the strongest pre-

1 sumptive

sumptive evidence that he continued to reside in Southwark to the year 1608, which is four years after the date of this pretended deed ; nor is there any ground for supposing that he ceased to reside there, till he quitted the stage entirely ; for he did not purchase the tenement in the Blackfriars till March 10, 1612-13, (about which time he probably retired to Stratford ;) and soon after he got possession of it, he appears to have made a lease of it for a term of years to one John Robinson, who is mentioned in his Will three years afterwards as the tenant in possession. Supposing he had not then retired from the stage, his residence on the Bankside could be no inconvenience to him, the passage from thence to Puddle Wharf, near the Blackfriars theatre, being very short.

So much for that part of this deed which describes our author as a resident in Blackfriars in the year 1604. Let us now examine the curious tale contained in it. Shakspeare, we find, being *on Thames* with *his* friend, *his* Ireland, (who bore, we are told, the two christian names of WILLIAM HENRY, which are likewise the baptismal names of the son of the Editor of these
deeds

deeds and papers,) and other friends,—by some mismanagement in consequence of the boatmen being “*toe merrye throughe liquorre,*” the boat was *upsette*, and our poet would have been drowned, had not his life been most happily saved by Mr. William Henry Ireland.—Whether Shakspeare could swim, I have no means of ascertaining. I think it, however, extremely probable, from his admirable lines in the *TEMPEST*, that he was well acquainted with that useful art.¹³¹ This, however, is mere conjecture, which certainly can have no weight if the deed before us be genuine: for here we find that the hapless bard was as ignorant in this respect as those little wanton boys whom he describes, that, trusting to bladders, are sometimes carried beyond their depth. It

¹³¹ “ I saw him beat the surges under him,
 “ And ride upon their backs ; he trod the water,
 “ Whose enmity he flung aside, and breasted
 “ The surge most swoln that met him : his bold head
 “ ’Bove the contentious waves he kept, and oar’d
 “ Himself with his good arms in lusty stroke
 “ To the shore, that o’er his wave-worn basis bow’d,
 “ As stooping to relieve him : I not doubt,
 “ He came alive to land.”

See also *JULIUS CÆSAR*, Act I. :

“ For once upon a raw and gusty day,” &c.

is worthy of notice that when all his friends, as well as the boatmen, had got safe to shore, and saw the poor poet drowning, not one of them offered him any assistance, except Master WILLIAM HENRY Ireland. Most fortunately this kind act was left to him alone. Shakspeare, in similar circumstances, I have no doubt would have “plunged in, accoutred as he was;” but his friend, warmly as he was attached to our author, though this accident happened close to the shore, which he had just reached by swimming, would not venture again into the water, till he had “takenne offe his Jerrekynne,” which we may suppose was made of blue velvet, drawn out with white sattin, and given him by *his* friend, *his* Shakspeare, out of that splendid wardrobe, an account of which is reserved for a subsequent page. As for the other expert swimmers, they most unfeelingly stood stone-still, one only of them observing that Shakspeare was drowning.—Some of the occurrences mentioned in these papers are so extremely curious and picturesque, that one naturally is induced to wish that they may be delineated by some of our excellent modern artists. The *drowning poet* will
make

make a very proper companion for his superlative editor, as exhibited by the admirable pencil of Hogarth.

BUT to return once more to verbal disquisition.—The word UPSET is “a word of exceeding good command,” and requires our particular attention. It is perfectly a seaman’s word, and was without doubt first introduced by that brave and honest class of men, to express shortly and clearly one of those unfortunate accidents to which the uncertain element on which a great part of their lives is passed, exposes them. So far from being found in any ancient vocabulary, it has not a place even in Johnson’s Dictionary. It has crept into our language, I think, within these few years, but certainly within this century; and I do not recollect ever to have seen it in print, except in a newspaper, before the present publication. The word indeed was so little familiar to me, that, till I sat down to examine these spurious papers, I had not a precise idea of its signification. It denotes, as I now understand, a particular species of misfortune to which seamen are liable. When a boat is turned keel-upward by the mere force of

the waves, it is in the seaman's language *upset*; when a similar accident happens by mismanagement of a sail, or the force of the wind, the boat is then said to be *overturned*. Here, therefore, we find an accident not very likely to happen on the Thames, where we seldom have such boisterous waves, expressed by a word unknown to our language for above a century afterwards.

THERE are several other circumstances belonging to this deed, that must not be passed over. The editor in his preface mentions, that “amongst a mass of family papers the Contracts between Shakspeare, Lowine, and Condelle, and the lease granted by him and Hemynge to Michael Fraser and his wife, which was first found, were discovered; and *soon afterwards* the deed of gift to William Henry Ireland.” When the believers in the authenticity of these MSS. were first informed of this deed, they can best ascertain. I certainly never heard it mentioned by any of those who were in the habit of inspecting these papers, till May last, about FOUR MONTHS after they were first announced; and lately on
my

my questioning a very accurate friend on this subject, who, from time to time, had a very early view of all of them, as they were *brought forward*, he told me that my recollection was perfectly correct. The words, however, *soon afterwards*, being indefinite, perhaps may have been intended to apply to the period which I have mentioned. In the intervening time every one was naturally curious to know from what quarter they were derived. A plausible story was circulated, (but I know not on what authority,) that our poet's associate in the theatre, John Heminges, having died intestate, his papers fell into the hands of an artful attorney, from whom they descended to the *unknown* gentleman, in whose house they were discovered; to which there was no objection but that Heminges had made a Will, which I published a few years ago. This circumstance, I remember, I mentioned to the gentleman from whom I received the foregoing account, and from that time I never heard more of John Heminges. But the time when his eldest son, William, died, being unknown, the *true believers* were obliged to rest their faith on him for
a while;

a while ; till at length a kind of obscure twilight was thrown upon the subject by the lucky discovery of the deed before us : which certainly furnishes a very plausible ground for the unknown gentleman's so liberally bestowing all these treasures (this valuable relique among the rest) on the son of the editor, who most fortunately bears the same two christian names. The only difficulty is, that it has not yet been quite satisfactorily proved that any such man as *William Henry* Ireland ever existed in the days of Shakspeare ; though there are unquestionable proofs that a *piece of him*, (as Horatio says,) one *William Ireland*, did live at that period : an honest tradesman who kept a shop in the Blackfriars, and whom, about five years ago, I had the honour of first introducing to the world.

In March 1612-13, as I have already mentioned, Shakspeare purchased from one Henry Walker a house in the Blackfriars.¹³² This house Walker had bought

¹³² It is observable, that this modern spelling is constantly employed in this and all the other deeds where Blackfriars is mentioned, except one. But the spelling and phraseology of Shakspeare's time was—*the black-fryers*.

in Oct. 1604, from Mr. Mathew Bacon of Gray's Inn, as appears by a conveyance among the Fetherstonhaugh Deeds now before me; at the bottom of which I find this same William Ireland as an attesting witness. He appears to have been no great clerk, but made as handsome a *mark* as can well be desired.—In the Conveyance to Shakspeare, which in honour of this person will be found in the Appendix, (N^o. II.) the tenement which he purchased is described as having been “sometymes in the tenure of James Gardyner Esquier, and since that in the tenure of John Fortescue Gent. and now or late being in the tenure or occupation of one WILLIAM IRELAND, or of his assignee or assigns.” From the prefix *one*, the want of the addition of *Gent.* and the word *occupation*, which at that time was a term that denoted trade,¹³³ I had no doubt that he was a tradesman: and I found my conjecture confirmed by a Lease of a stable in Blackfriars, which

¹³³ So, in CORIOLANUS :

“ ——— you that stood so much

“ Upon the voice of *occupation*, and

“ The breath of garlick-eaters.”

was

was made to him by John Green in 1602, (now in the possession of Mr. Wallis,) in which he is expressly styled a Haberdasher. Some time after Henry Walker had purchased the house in Blackfryars in 1604, this haberdasher appears to have become his tenant at will, previous to which time the premises were occupied by one William Robinson. Notwithstanding the great intimacy which, we are told, subsisted between this tradesman and our author, as soon as he purchased this house, he turned Ireland out; for on the subsequent day after it was conveyed to him (or more probably on the same day) in addition to the mortgage made to Walker for sixty pounds of the purchase-money unpaid,—“to make assurance double sure,” he also made him a lease of the premises for one hundred years at the rent of a pepper-corn, (March 11th, 1612-13,) with a proviso that on the payment of the sum above-mentioned the lease should be void:¹³⁴ and afterwards, when he had paid off the whole of the

¹³⁴ This deed is among the other title-deeds of the Rev. Mr. Fetherstonhaugh, in the custody of Albany Wallis, Esq.

purchase-money, he made a lease for a term of years to John Robinson, the son probably of William.¹³⁵ Whether the William Henry Ireland mentioned in the deed now before us, as the bosom-friend of Shakspeare, was intended to represent this Haberdasher, and we are to suppose that the scriveners who drew the several instruments forgot one of his christian names, or we are to believe that Mr. William Henry Ireland, the friend of Shakspeare, was the father, or son, or brother, or uncle, of the other, I know not; but it seems it was WILLIAM HENRY *alone* that gave the name to a yard in that quarter called *Ireland's Yard*, and the poor Haberdasher, though he appears to have lived a long time there, had no title to so honourable a distinction.¹³⁶

IT

¹³⁵ See APPENDIX, N^o. III.

¹³⁶ To *A VIEW of the House of this Mr. WILLIAM HENRY Ireland* (which will be *reviewed* presently) the editor of these treasures has subjoined the following observations: "The house here sketched by the hand of Shakspeare, and situated in Blackfriars, became his property. The yard adjoining, at this hour, bears the name of his *friend*, Ireland, who *occupied* it, and is pointed out to the

IT is not very easy to conjecture on what principle the unknown gentleman (for in this case none of his ancestors or their attorneys can bear any part of the burthen) could have proceeded, when he fabricated this deed. Whether he had never read the Mortgage-deed which I published in 1790, in which WILLIAM IRELAND is mentioned as a person who had for a time occupied the house in the Blackfriars, previous

passenger by two painted boards, one at each end, bearing the inscription of *Ireland's Yard*. The Fetherstonhaugh family, to whom it now belongs, [whether the *house* or the *yard* is here meant, is not very clear,] were in Shakspeare's time, it is presumed, the *ground landlords*: [See the Conveyance to Shakspeare, Appendix, N^o. II. "— and also the *soyle* whereuppon the said tenement standeth;"] and the editor has the satisfaction of informing the publick, that he has been favoured by Albany Wallis, Esq. of Norfolk street, the Agent of that family, with a ground-plot of this estate, *taken in the year 1672*, in which it appears that the passage leading to this house, there described as Ireland's house, and whose name is there also given to a small street adjoining, constitutes a part of *Ireland's Yard*."—This reasoning is so very clear and conclusive, that no reasonable man, I think, can doubt—that there is such a place as *Ireland's Yard*, and that it derived its name from a person of the name of *Ireland*. But as for our WILLIAM HENRY, I fear, notwithstanding his great expertness in swimming, he must still remain in the mire of the neighbouring Fleet-ditch, where for the present we shall leave him.

to Shakspeare's purchase, and merely by accident or out of zeal to do honour to the son of the editor, stumbled on the name of WILLIAM HENRY Ireland; or whether he supposed that no one would examine that original and authentick deed, and discover that WILLIAM, was not WILLIAM HENRY, Ireland; or whether, finally, he supposed that one of these persons might very well pass for the other; (as a mere misnomer, arising from a clerical error of so trivial a nature as the omission of a christian name,) on which of these various grounds he proceeded, I have no means of ascertaining; but certain it is, that his zeal to serve his friend, (enkindled by so valuable an acquisition as that good estate which he has lately *recovered*, or *discovered*,) greatly outran his discretion, and that no other three words in the language could been selected more unpropitious to the cause of imposture than the names—WILLIAM HENRY Ireland.—The deed in which they are found is so perfectly a *felo de se*, that were there no denotations of fraud in the other instruments and papers, (as they are spangled all over with them,) the whole would “ take corruption

“ From this particular fault : *this* dram of base
 “ *Would* all the noble subsance of worth dout,
 “ To his own scandal.”

It will not require a long dissertation to shew that in the beginning of the last century, and long afterwards, persons of the first rank in England were contented with one christian name, though this haberdasher in the Blackfriars has been decorated with two. As the House of Commons is usually composed of the most respectable gentlemen in every county, if any one at that time had been baptized with two christian names, he might naturally be expected to be found among the Members of that house. In the first parliament of King James, which met in 1603, one year before the date of this pretended deed, I find four hundred and sixty seven persons returned ; and among them one only with two christian names, not, however, analogous to those now under consideration.¹³⁷ In the List of Baronets created

¹³⁷ PARL. HIST. vol. v. p. II. In this parliament Sir Thomas *Posthumus* Hobbey sat for Scarborough : but this, as I have observed above, is not properly an exception. When a son was born after the death of his father, it was common in that age to add *Posthumus* to the name given

created by King James between May 1611 and August 1623, containing two hundred and five names, I find not one: among the Knights of the Bath made at the creation of Henry Prince of Wales in 1610, and of Prince Charles in 1616, not one. In a word, neither the parliament that met in 1621, nor that which assembled in 1627, nor the long parliament of 1640,¹³⁸ furnishes a single example of a gentleman distinguished by a second baptismal name. Even the House of Peers during this whole period, nay, the heirs apparent of the crown, Henry and Charles, could boast of no such distinction: it was reserved alone for this worthy haberdasher of Blackfriars, the *jerrekynned* Nautilus of the Thames, the pre-

given him at the font, merely to denote this circumstance. So Dudley *Posthumus* Lovelace, (brother of the Poet,) and many others.—This is not a second christian name in the sense now under consideration.

¹³⁸ Even in the Restoration Parliament there was but one member who had two christian names; Sir Francis Henry Lee. In the parliament which met in 1661, and continued till 1678, there was not one: at least I do not find one in Chamberlaine's List, printed in 1673. See also Dugdale's *ORIG. JUD.* and Wood's *ATH. OXON.* where, if I mistake not, not a single lawyer or academick with two baptismal names is to be found.

server

server of Shakspeare's life, the renowned and never-to-be-forgotten Mr. WILLIAM HENRY Ireland.

LEAVING him in full possession of his honours, let us take one other glance at the curious deed where alone they are recorded. In recitals in pleadings, &c. in the courts of law and equity, when a Will is mentioned, lawyers, with their usual caution, commonly state that the testator died *on or about* a certain day (named), and that previously *on or about* another certain day, which is also named, he made his Will. But where a man has been near drowning, and he is going to reward the friend who saved his life, it is somewhat remarkable that he should not remember the precise day on which he had so providential an escape, though not two months had elapsed from the time when this disaster happened. So very careful a chronicler as Shakspeare, who on the backs of all his papers, we find, wrote a short account of them or some injunction touching their preservation, might, methinks, have made a little minute concerning this watry escape. I have stated that not two months had elapsed, because the deed

is said to be made on the 25th of Oct. 1604, and the accident to have happened “ onne or abowte the thyrde daye of the *laste* monethe, beyng the monethe of *August.*” Here indeed is another small difficulty to be got over; for the poor half-drowned poet is made to know so little of the ordinary divisions of the year, that he conceives the month of October to follow immediately after that of August; a circumstance not very easy to be accounted for, unless we suppose, that when he made this deed he was as much distempered with liquor as his boatmen were, when, like his own Falstaff, he was soused into the Thames; or that some Macclesfield of ancient days persuaded the people of England to annihilate the ill-fated month of September in that year.

THE particular species of gift which our poet's gratitude dictated on this occasion next demands our attention:—“ for the whyche service I doe herebye give hym as folowithe !!!¹³⁹ fyrste mye written playe
of

¹³⁹ No punctuation whatsoever is employed in deeds. These three notes of admiration (of which even the printed books of former times furnish no example,) are therefore
here

of Henrye fowrthe, Henrye fyfthe, Kyng John, Kyng Leare, as allsoe mye written playe neverr yett imprintedd whych I have named Kyng henrye thyrde of Englande alle the profytts of the whych are whollye toe bee for sayde Ireland ande atte hys deathe thenne toe hys fyrste sonne namedd also William henrye ;” for this name of WILLIAM HENRY is to be continued, like an heir-loom, in the family, to the third and fourth generation.

FROM his mentioning his “ *written* playe of Henrye Fowrthe,” &c. one not particularly conversant with the various editions of our poet’s works might suppose that neither KING HENRY IV. nor HENRY V. had been printed in 1604 ; but the first part of the former had appeared in 1598, the second in 1600, and HENRY THE FIFTH in the same year. KING JOHN indeed was not then printed ; and what is somewhat unlucky, KING LEAR was not

here faithfully preserved, not only as what Dogberry would call a most graceful and senseless ornament, but because they render this instrument what the collectors of coins and other rarities so highly estimate, *unique*.

written

written till after the 24th of October, 1604, as I have shewn in the Essay on the Chronological Order of our author's plays.¹⁴⁰

The

¹⁴⁰ PLAYS and POEMS, &c. 1790. vol. i. p. i. p. 353.

The following *shrewd* remark on this subject is worth notice: "Mr. Malone shrewdly guesses - - - that it [K. LEAR,] was not written till after the *accession* of James the First to *the crown of England*, which happened, *says Mr. B.* on the 24th of October, 1604; but which happened, *says History*, on the 24th of March, 1602-3. So much for accuracy of dates, and skill in comparison." COMPARATIVE REVIEW, &c. p. 54.

It is an old remark, which can never be too often repeated, that those who write, should read. It is, however, very clear, that the writer of the above passage, though he refers to my Essay at the bottom of the page, had not read it, or did not understand it.—Not one word will be found there concerning this play being written after the accession of King James to the throne; neither did the gentleman who relied on my authority, say a word of his Accession. What I *have* said, and what I was quoted as saying, was, that the play of KING LEAR was written after James was *proclaimed* King of GREAT BRITAIN; and that was not on the 24th of March, 1602-3, but on the 24th of October, 1604. "So much for accuracy of dates, and skill in comparison."

In fixing the date of this tragedy I had less difficulty than in almost any of Shakspeare's plays, and was not reduced to *guessing*, as the author would have found if he had looked at what he has referred to. My words are,—“This play is *ascertained* to have been written after the month of October, 1604,” &c.

H H

“The

The present deed bears date the following day : to reconcile these dates therefore we have only to suppose that Shakspeare rose early on the 25th ; and considering the wonderful facility with which he wrote, it will not be extravagant to suppose that he began and finished that sublime tragedy in one morning, previous to the Scrivener's engrossing this deed.—Leaving this play to shift for itself, it must be remembered that our poet had already sold to the theatre such of the plays here enumerated as were then written, as was the constant practice of that time, and had no property whatsoever in them : and had he ever mentioned his historical play of Henry the Fifth, he would have written it, not as we find it here, but *Fift*,¹⁴¹ as it is printed in the early quarto edition of that piece, and in the folio copy

¹⁴¹ “The Chronicle History of Henry the *fift*,” &c. 4to. 1600. And so in the folio, 1623, “The Life of Henry the *Fift*.” See also Stowe's ANNALS, 4to. 1605. p. 557 : King Henry the *Fift*, born at Monmouth,” &c. William Basse's Epitaph on Shakspeare ascertains the ancient pronunciation of this word, which remains the same at this day in many parts of England :

“To lodge all four in one bed make a *shif*t

“Until doomsday ; for hardly will a *fift*,” &c.

SHAKSP. *ut supr.* Vol. I. P. I. p. 198.

published by Heminges and Condellin 1623; as he himself unquestionably pronounced the word, and as half the people of England pronounce it at this day.

OF the play of “ Henrye thyrde of Englande,” I have only to say, that I make no doubt it is as good a piece as any that has been or ever will be drawn from the same repository.—Before however we fling this instrument after all the rest, it may not be without use to take a slight view of the indorsements on it. They are these: “ Sealed and delyveredd in the presauce of us Jo: Edwards—Jos. Byggett.—Deede of guyfte from Shakspeare to *Irelaunde*—2 James.”

THOSE who are conversant with deeds of that period know, that the Scrivener who drew them, and his servant or apprentice, were almost always witnesses to them. On neither this deed, however, nor any other that has been produced on the present occasion, does the name of a Scrivener appear as a subscribing witness.—But this defect on the back of this and all the other deeds is not half so fatal as that indorsement which

the ignorance of the fabricator has placed on them: the year of the king's reign in English. If the maker of these instruments had even been what, I think, Lord Camden called a *sucking* lawyer, he would have learned, before he had turned over a few leaves of Sir Edward Coke's First Institute, that some ancient feofments had been discovered to be forged by their having livery of seisin indorsed on them; ¹⁴² and would not have fallen into a similar error.— In the time we are now treating of, it was by no means common to write either the year of the king's reign, or the year of our Lord, on the back of a deed. I have very

¹⁴² “ For certainly (says this great lawyer,) the witnesses named in the deed were witnesses of both [the delivery of the deed and livery of seisin]; and witnesses either of delivery of the deed or of livery of seisin by expresse tearms, was but of later times; and the reason was in respect of the notoriety of the feofment. - - - [So] if a deed, in the style of the king, name him *defensor fidei* before 13 H. 8., or *supreme head* before 20 H. 8., (at which time he was first acknowledged *supremē* head by the clergy, albeit the king had not the style of *supreme head* in his charters, &c. till 22 H. 8.) or *king* of Ireland before 33 H. 8., at which time he assumed the title of *King of Ireland*, being before that called *Lord* of Ireland, it is certainly forged: *et sic de SIMILIBUS.*” Co. Litt. 7. Hargrave's edit.

seldom

seldom found more than a short note of the purport of it, (as, “ A Deed belonging to the house in Blackfryers,”—or “ A deed of bargain and sale from Walker to Shakespeare,”) and often not even so much as that : but when the year of the king’s reign *was* indorsed, it was always written in Latin (2 Jacobi, or 2 Jac. &c.);¹⁴³ and this continued to be the uniform practice till the statute 4 Geo. II. c. 26. was made, which directing that all the proceedings at law should be from thenceforth in English, naturally produced an alteration in this minute particular also. The indorsement, therefore, on this and all the other deeds before us, containing the year of the king’s reign in English, instead of Latin, is a decisive proof of forgery ; and the two words “ 2 *James*,” are as fatal on the outside as WILLIAM-HENRY are within this instrument.—Thus we see that the spirit of Horace’s precept,—*talis ad inum*, operated

¹⁴³ So the Statutes were formerly always referred to in Latin : 10 Jac., 4 Car. &c. And Sir George Croke’s Reports in the time of Elizabeth and the two succeeding princes, are constantly cited in the same language : Cro. Jac. Cro. Car.

through

through every part of these fabrications, however little the letter of it may have been known to the fabricator.

XIII. TRIBUTARY LINES TO IRELAND.

XIV. VIEW OF WILLIAM HENRY IRELAND'S HOUSE AND COAT OF ARMS.

XV. ENGRAVED PORTRAITS OF BASSANIO AND SHYLOCK.

I MAY now congratulate your Lordship on being within sight of land; for after I shall have dispatched the foregoing—what shall I call them?—“ unreal mockeries,” which will be quickly done, we have only three or four deeds left to examine.

ON the “ Tributary Lines” to the renowned WILLIAM HENRY, I shall not detain you long, contenting myself with a short extract, by way of specimen :

“ O Modelle of Virretue Charytyes sweeteste
 “ Chylde thye Shakspeare thanks thee
 “ Norre Verse norre Sygh norre Teare canne
 “ paynte mye Soule norre saye bye
 “ halfe howe muche I love thee.”

Is

Is this the composition of Shakspeare, or of a young lady of fifteen, after reading the first novel that has fallen into her hands?— But I beg pardon of all the young ladies of Great Britain and Ireland; there is not one of them that would not, even at that early age, produce something more in character than the tender effusion of one man addressing another, which is here stuck in between the verses and tears of our blubbering poet.

THE next paper is briefly, and in the true modern style, entitled—“VIEW of my Masterre Irelande’s House,” &c. with two coats of arms beneath it, *trick’d* (as, I think, the heralds call it,) and most beautifully linked together; the one of Shakspeare, the other of our hero, William Henry Ireland.— The VIEW is a miserable exhibition of an old-fashioned tenement, with the modern improvement of windows down to the ground, done with a pen and ink by our immortal bard. The only objection to it is, the title; the word *View*, in the sense of a delineation of a house or any other object, either on canvass, paper, or copper, being unfortunately wholly unknown to our ancestors,

cestors, and so completely modern, that it is not found in any one of the various vocabularies which I have mentioned in the course of this inquiry. Had the word borne this signification in the last century, we should have had here—*A VIEW,*” &c. not the clipt language of the present day.

I HAVE not met with many delineations of this kind so early as the time of our author ; but when such *Views* came to be commonly delineated and engraved, they were called PROSPECTS, or PROSPECTIVES, or PICTURES. Thus we have “ PROSPECTS of remarkable places in and about the city of London,”—sold by Overton, after the Restoration. “ The South-east PROSPECT of the Church of St. Dunstan’s.” “ The South PROSPECT of the Citie of London, (after a print by Hollar,) R. P. *excudit* ;” in which many heads appear on London Bridge, and old St. Paul’s without a spire. “ A PROSPECT of London and Westminster, taken at several stations to the southward,” sold by Robert Morden, at the Atlas in Cornhill, and Philip Lea, at the Atlas in Cheapside. “ The PICTURE of the most famous City of London, as it appeared in the night in the height of its ruinous

ruinous condition by fire, September 2, 1666.”—Engraved by Sherwin. “The West PROSPECT of the Cathedral Church of St. Paul,” engraved by Daniel King.¹⁴⁴ In 1693 was published, in folio, Slezer’s “THEATRUM SCOTIÆ, containing the PROSPECTS of his Majesty’s Palaces, Castles, and most considerable towns in Scotland.” And even within this present century have appeared “A PROSPECT of the seat of Sir William Ashhurst, Knight, at Highgate,” (Member of Parliament for London, in the reign of Queen Anne,) and “A South PROSPECT of Pancras Wells.”¹⁴⁵ The word VIEW, as now used, came to us from the French, (*Vue et Perspective*) if I mistake not, in the beginning of the present century.¹⁴⁶—So much

¹⁴⁴ All the PROSPECTS here mentioned, are in a volume in the Library of the Society of Antiquaries, marked LONDON PLANS, &c. The names of the Sellers and Engravers of them have been specified, as they contribute in some measure to fix the dates.

¹⁴⁵ *Ut supr.*

¹⁴⁶ In 1710 appeared “The VIEW of the inside of the Quire of St. Paul’s Cathedral, Queen Anne, and the noble House of Lords,” &c. engraved by Du Guernier, a Frenchman. In a Volume belonging to the Society of Antiquaries, given by Lord Coleraine.—The French used the word *vue*, in this sense, early in the sixteenth century.

much for this curious VIEW, which was done by our author in order to win a wager of five shillings.¹⁴⁷

As for our Blackfriars' *Marksman* and Haberdasher, when he got these arms which our poet has so gracefully tricked, I am altogether ignorant. Certain however

In Lord Orford's Catalogue of Engravers, p. 61, I find—“VIEW of York from the Water-House,” &c. by William Lodge, (who was born in 1649, and died in 1689.) But this description was given by Virtue, who employed the language of his own day (little thinking that he was laying a trap for our forger); for on examining the original in the very valuable topographical Collection of John Symmons, of Paddington, Esq. I find that Lodge knew nothing of this VIEW. His prints are entitled, “The ancient and loyal City of York;” by William Lodge. [Dedicated to the Hon. Sir John Broeke, Bart.]—“From the old Water-house in York.” By W. L.

¹⁴⁷ Here we have another proof of several of these fabrications having been founded on archetypes furnished by the edition of Shakspeare's Plays and Poems, published in 1790. See Vol. I. P. II. p. 323, where I have given a Letter addressed to Edward Alleyn, the Player, who was requested to play, for a *wager*, some part in which Knell, or Bently, (the Garrick and Barry of their day,) had excelled:

“Deny me not, sweet Ned; the wager's downe,
 “And twice as muche commaunde of me or myne;
 “And if you wyne, I swear the half is thine,
 “And for an overplus an *English crowne*.”

it

it is, that in those days armorial bearings were thought a very honourable distinction ; and that it was not quite so common at that time as it is at present, for a haberdasher to walk to the College of Heralds, and as soon as he had learned what were the arms of an ancient family whose name he happened to bear, to assume them without further ceremony.

THE originals of the two following coloured prints, one of which presents us with the portrait of an actor, (Shakspeare, if you will,) in the part of Bassanio, in THE MERCHANT OF VENICE, and the other with that of Shylock in the same play, I have not seen ; and if I had seen them, I am not entitled, by any knowledge of the art, to decide upon their merit or authenticity. But by those who are perfect and indisputable judges in such matters, I have been informed, that in spite of the process of discoloration by tobacco-water and of fumigation by smoke and brimstone, which they appear to have undergone in that unknown repository in the country from whence all these curiosities have been

112

issued,

issued, they are manifestly washed drawings of a recent date. The Dutch Shylock, with his blue night-cap, and his hands in his trowsers, will, I am told, be easily recognized by any one who has either visited Holland, or seen any representation of the natives of that country.

XVI. AGREEMENT BETWEEN SHAKSPEARE AND LOWINE.

THE sixteenth article of this Miscellany is an Agreement between our poet and John Lowin, the player, made on the 7th of November, 1608; by which Mr. Lowin binds himself for four years “to playe upon *the* stage, (what stage is not mentioned,) ¹⁴⁸ as well in those comedyes and tragedyes which he [Shakspeare] has alreadye produced, as those which he may at anye time hereafter *brynge forward*, ande likewise any other Playes which he the saide W^m Shakspeare maye at anye tyme cause to be

¹⁴⁸ In the real stage-contracts of that time, the theatre on which such of the actors as were called *Hirelings* were engaged to play, was always mentioned either by name or description; and they covenanted not to play in any other publick or common playhouse. See the next note.

played,

played, not written or composd bye *hymselfe*, but whiche are the Wrytyngs or *compositiions* of others." The actor's salary, it is agreed, shall be (not one guinea per week, as was maliciously reported, but) the summe of " *oune-pound ande ten shillings per week.*"

THE phrase *to bring forward*, which occurs in more places than one in this volume, is now a very common theatrical expression, being presented to us almost every morning at breakfast in the play-bills of the present day : but how *ancient* it is, I shall leave to the partisans of these manuscripts to ascertain. In the History of the Stage I have shewn, that the principal actors formerly played on Shares, as it is called ; that is, they divided the profits of the exhibition daily in various proportions among them ; as is yet the practice in itinerant companies in the country. Other inferior actors were retained by the name of HIRELINGS,¹⁴⁹ at a weekly salary of
from

¹⁴⁹ " M̄d y^t this 8th of December 1597 my father Philip Hinshlow hiered as a covenant servant willyam Kendall for ij years after the statute of winchester wth ij single penc A [he] to geve hym for his sayd servis everi week of his playing

from six to ten shillings a week, which was paid by the Sharers ; and each Sharer was entitled to have a boy,¹⁵⁰ who played either young or female characters, for whose services he received from three to six shillings a week. The mode frequently was, for some speculator to build a theatre, which he conducted, dividing the emoluments into shares, and retaining to himself the receipts of the Galleries or half the Galleries,¹⁵¹ to reimburse him for all expences,

playing in London x s. & in y^e cuntrie vs. for the w^{ch} he covenanteth for y^e space of those ij yeares to be redye at all Tymes to play *in y^e howse of the said Philip* & in no other during the sayd Terme.

Wittnes my self the writer of This—E. Alleyn.”

Henslowe’s Register. MS.

See also PLAYS and POEMS of SHAKSPEARE, Vol. I. P. II. p. 311.

¹⁵⁰ Hart, the celebrated tragedian, had been Robinson’s boy or apprentice, at Blackfriars, and Mohun was Beeston’s boy, at the Cockpit.

¹⁵¹ “ Item, he [Philip Henslowe] agrees with the same Companie, that they should enter bond to plaie with him for three yeares at such house and houses as hee shall appoint, and to allowe him *half galleries* for the said house and houses, and the other halfe galleries towards his debt of 126^l. and other such moneys as hee should laie out for playe-apparel duringe the space of the said three yeares agreeing with them, in consideracōn wheareof to seale each of them
a bond

pences, of which he kept an account; such as dresses, &c. for new plays, the purchase of the copies of such plays as a certain number of the Sharers should think fit to be bought, and all other incidental charges. At a certain period he settled accounts with the company; ¹⁵¹ and if the receipts appropriated

a bond of 200^l. to find them a convenient house and houses, and laie out such moneies as fower of the Sharers should think fitt for theire use in apparel, which at the three yeares end being paid for to be delivered to the Sharers; who accordinglie entered the said bonds, but Mr. Henslowe and Mr. Mead deferred the same, and in conclusion denied to seale at all."

From a paper, entitled ARTICLES OF GRIEVANCE against Mr. Hinchlowe. MS.

¹⁵² "Reckned wth the company of my lorde the earle of notingames men to this place, & I have layd owte for them the some of vi hunderd & thirtie two pounnds & they have payd unto me of this deatte iij hunderd & fiftie & eyghte powndes to this daye beinge the 13 of october 1599."

Henslowe's Register. MS.

"Mērd. That the fulle some of all the deabtes w^{ch} we owe unto Mr. Henslow to this xvi of m^che 1603, cometh to juste the some of 140^l. 1s. ood. w^{ch} some of 140^l. 01s. ood. we whose names are here under wrytten do acknowledge ower dew deatte & promysse trewe payment. Thomas Blackwood." *Ibid.*

"Caste up all the acowntes frome the beginninge of the world untell this daye beinge the 14 daye of marche 1604 [1604-5] by Thomas Dowghton & Edward Jube for the

priated to him were not sufficient to defray the charges he had been at, the balance was paid him by the company in various proportions according to the shares they held ; who thus acquired a property in the plays and dresses which had been purchased.

I HAD been induced by a passage in an old Collection of Epigrams printed in 1614, to suppose that there were sometimes *forty* sharers in a company : but this was certainly a mistake ; and I have now good reason to believe that the sharers were usually not more than *twelve*. These shares were again often divided into two and sometimes into four parts : and the owner of the share, whether an actor or proprietor of the house, made a lease of such part of it as he chose to dispose of, to an actor, who paying a certain rent was thereby entitled to play in the company, to receive his dividend daily, (proportionable to what he held,) and to a share also in the property

the company of the Princes men and I Philipe Henslow
So ther reastethe dewe unto me P. Henslow the some of
xxiiij.¹¹ all Reconynge consernynge the company in stocke
generall descargd, and my sealfe descargd to them of all
deat." *Ibid.*

of the cloaths and other stage-necessaries,¹⁵³ which having been paid for out of the receipts of the house, or the pockets of the Sharers on settling accounts, became their own. What I have now stated is not conjectural, but is ascertained by a Lease intended to have been made by Philip Henslowe and Edward Alleyn in the year 1608, (the very year in which the deed before us is said to have been made,) to Thomas Downton, an actor ;¹⁵⁴ and by other documents in my possession, which have been given in the notes. This explains the following passage in the Will of John Heminges : “ And I do hereby will and appoint that the moiety or one half of the yearly benefit and profit of the several *parts*¹⁵⁵ which I have by *lease* in the several playhouses of the Globe and Black-fryers, - - - be from time to time received and taken up by my executor.”

¹⁵³ On this ground the Sharer, when he came into the company, laid down a sum of money, which was paid in to the general stock.

¹⁵⁴ See the APPENDIX, N^o. IV. He had originally been a Hireling, but afterwards became a Sharer.

¹⁵⁵ In a subsequent part of his Will he uses the technical term : “ — the yearly profit and benefit which shall arise or be made by my several *parts* and *shares* in the several playhouses called the Globe and Blackfriers.” SHAKSP. Vol. I. P. II. p. 194.

JOHN Lowin, whose name was formerly sometimes written *Lewin*, but never *Lowine*, as it is exhibited in this deed, was born, as I have already mentioned, in 1576. He probably went on the stage before the end of that century: but he was not in the Company of the Lord Chamberlain's Servants, to which Shakspeare belonged; and in 1603, when he was one of Lord Worcester's servants, he was in so low a situation, that in that year he was under the necessity of borrowing a very small sum of money from the Proprietor of the Rose Theatre, where he then played, to enable him to go with a strolling party into the country. This fact is proved by the following memorandum:

“LENT unto John Lowyn the 12 of marche 1602, [1602-3] when he went into the contrey with the company to playe, in Redy mony, the some of——vs.”¹⁵⁶

SOME time in the following year he joined our author's Company who then had become the King's Servants, and appeared

¹⁵⁶ Henslowe's Register. MS.

personally

personally in the Induction to Marston's *MALECONTENT*, which was played at the theatre in the Blackfriars then newly taken by that company.¹⁵⁷ He was at this time without any doubt a subordinate actor, and did not get into the first rank till after the death of Shakspeare and Burbadge, and the retirement of Heminges and Condell, in or before 1623.¹⁵⁸ The progress of this actor's reputation

¹⁵⁷ He likewise appears in the list of the performers of Ben Jonson's *SEJANUS*, which he informs us was acted by the King's Servants in 1603; but the year then extending to the 25th of March, this piece must have been produced in 1603-4.—That Lowin was not of their company in 1603, is proved not only by Henslowe's MS., but by the Patent granted to Shakspeare, &c. May 19, 1603, where, though we find the names of the obscure Cowley and William Sly, Lowin's name does not appear.

¹⁵⁸ That Condell had retired before 1623, is ascertained by the title-page of Webster's *DUCHESS OF MALFY*, printed in that year. Heminges without doubt retired at the same time, or before; for in the next year Lowin and Taylor stand at the head of the List of the King's Servants. See *PLAYS and POEMS of Shakspeare*, Vol. I. P. II. p. 208.

Heminges, however, it appears from Sir Henry Herbert's MS. took some concern in the management of the theatre, and used to present Sir Henry, as Master of the Revels, with his New-Year's gift, for three or four years afterwards.—Shakspeare died in 1616, and Burbadge in 1619: thus,

réputation I have thought it necessary to mark particularly, because in another deed, that shall very soon be *brought forward*, dated 20 Feb. 1611-12, we shall find him called OUR BEST ACTOR, when he was only emerging into notice. Our fabricator was led into this error by two lines which I have quoted from an old lampoon written on Ben Jonson :

“ Let Lowin cease, and Taylor scorn to touch

“ The loathed stage, for thou hast made it such :”

and by another quotation from Wright's HISTORIA HISTRIONICA, in which it is said that “ before the Wars he used to act Falstaff with mighty applause.” But this undoubtedly relates to the period between 1623 and 1641, as the preceding verses have a reference to the year 1632, when Jonson's MAGNETICK LADY was played, which the writer asserts had rendered the stage loathsome. Accordingly, in 1625, Lowin had attained to so high a rank as to be named together with Taylor in the Patent granted to the King's Servants by Charles

therefore, about the period I have mentioned, an open field was left to Taylor and Lowin.—Taylor, from 1612 to 1616, appears to have played with another Company.

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the First, immediately after Heminges and Condell, who though they appear to have ceased to act, preserved a property in the theatre; and not long before, (Dec. 20, 1624,) on the Master of the Revels expressing his disapprobation at the play of the SPANISH VICEROY having been performed by that company without a licence, the submission made on that occasion was signed by the ten principal actors in the King's Company, at the head of which list stand the names of Joseph Taylor and John Lowin.¹⁵⁹

BUT though Lowin in 1608 was only in the second class, there is no reason to suppose that a man who afterwards attained to such eminence was then an annual hireling. He without doubt had a half share, or some other portion of one, even then: a fatal circumstance for the deed before us. It is indeed, like the rest, a *felo de se*; for here we find him, like one of our modern actors, engaged for three years at a salary of one pound ten shillings a week. The actor is to receive his salary even when he is pre-

¹⁵⁹ SHAKSPEARE, Vol. I. P. II. p. 208.

vented

vented from playing by sickness or any other impediment; and, like one of our modern taylor or shoemakers, he is to receive his thirty shillings every *Saturday night before twelve o'clock*. In the Appendix will be found a genuine stage-contract of this very period, that renders it quite unnecessary to say more on this part of the subject; from which I shall only quote one passage that may serve to throw some light on this Saturday-Night-Clause. The deed, which was intended to have been executed in 1608, after informing us that Philip Henslowe and Edward Alleyn, in consideration of twenty pounds and ten shillings, had demised to Thomas Downton [an actor then in the Prince's Company, who played at the FORTUNE Theatre,] “ one eight parte of a fowerth of all such clere gaynes in monye as shall hereafter duringe the terme hereunder demised [thirteen years] arise, grow, accrew, or become dewe, or properly belonge unto the said Phillip Henslowe and Edward Alleyn, - - - - for or by reason of any stage-playing or other exercise, com̄oditie or use whatsoever, used or to be used or exercised within the play-house of
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the said Phillipp Henslow and Edward Alleyn, comonly called the Fortune, situate and beinge betweene Whitecrosstreet and Golding Lane,"—proceeds thus : “ And the said eight part of a fowerth parte of all the saide clere gaynes properly belonginge to the saide Phillipp Henslowe and Edward Alleyn to be paide by the saide Phillipp Henslowe and Edward Alleyn, or one of them, their or one of their executors or assignes, unto the saide Thomas Downton, or his assignes *every day that any play or other exercise shal be acted or exercised in the play-house aforesaide, upon the sharing of the monies gathered and gotten at every of the same playes and exercises, AS HERETOFORE HATH BEEN USED AND ACCUSTOMED.*” Mr. Downton covenants to pay Henslowe and Alleyn a Rent of ten shillings a year during his term ; to defray his due proportion of whatever expences may be incurred by the repairs of the play-house ; to exercise during the said term his faculty or quality of playing in the said house “ to the best and most benefit he can,” unless he should be disabled by sickness, or should obtain the consent of the Lessors ; and that he will not

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during

during the said term act in any common play-house in London or within two miles of it, except the Fortune, without the special licence of Henslowe and Alleyn (or one of them) in writing under their hands and seals.

HERE we have a true stage-contract of precisely the period in question, and as decisive a proof of the forgery of the deed which I have been obliged so minutely to examine, as can be conceived.

To furnish us, however, with additional proofs, if they were wanting, the fabricator has introduced the word *composition*, as descriptive of a written work. The word undoubtedly signified in our author's time the act of forming or composing a work, being used in that sense by Spencer;¹⁶⁰ but I do not believe that it then bore the signification of a written work. Our author has it not, I think, in either sense.¹⁶¹ The
highest

¹⁶⁰ " Simple is the device, and the composition meane; yet carrieth some delight." Epistle Ded. to MOTHER HUBBERD'S TALE, 4to. 1590.

¹⁶¹ " There is no *composition* [that is, congruity or consistency]

highest authority Dr. Johnson could find for this word, with the signification here required, is L'Estrange. Cawdrey in 1604 defines it, "A making or mingling together;" Bullokar in 1616, "a joining or putting together." From Cotgrave's Dictionary in 1611, it appears, that the French long before us employed this word in the sense required to justify its use in the deed now under consideration. "*Composition*. A composition, [here clearly in the sense given by Bullokar and Cawdrey,] a making, framing, a confection, compositure, compounding: also a *worke* or *book*, or the writing of a work or book; also accord," &c. Here we see he uses the English word as synonymous to the French in the first clause, which relates to *compounding*, &c. but when he comes to give that sense of the French word which we are now considering, he explains it by *booke* or *work*, not as before by the English word, *composition*; a proof that it was not then in use, in this latter sense. Cockeram in 1655 gives only the old interpretation,

sistency] in these news," says the Duke, in OTHELLO. This is the only place in which I recollect the word to have been used by Shakspeare.

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“ a joining or setting together :” but some years afterwards Philips in his *WORLD OF WORDS*, (3d Edition, 1671,) affixes to this word the signification which it now bears : “ A setting together ; also *a work set forth* in any piece of learning or art.”—Thus therefore, I think, we are furnished with strong presumptive evidence that this word in the sense we are now speaking of, came to us from the French about the time of the Restoration.

IN all the instances of modern language which I have produced, I am perfectly aware of the impossibility of proving a universal negative : but I have, I apprehend, *brought forward* evidence enough to satisfy any reasonable inquirer, and which at least is entitled to be received as true, till some proof of the existence of the contested words shall be produced from a book of Shakspeare’s age, by those who may differ from me in opinion.

THE Will of John Lowin (if ever he made one) not being extant, I am not furnished with his autograph, so as to prove
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the signature to this deed a forgery. But the other circumstances attending it render any additional proof of that kind quite unnecessary. The reader has only to compare the forged name of John Heminges with his true autograph, and then apply the old adage—*crimine ab uno disce omnes*. The names of his friend Joseph Taylor and the other comedians in Plate II. may also throw some light on the *fancy-scrrawl* of this “our best actor.”—Before, however, I dismiss this stage-contract, I must draw your Lordship’s attention to Master Lowin’s SEAL, which is well worthy of inspection with a magnifying-glass; being a well-formed head, copied, if I mistake not, from the representation of some of our Saxon Monarchs, among the engravings of Virtue.

I HAD almost forgot to mention, that though the Scrivener who drew this deed has written our poet’s christian name very correctly, the poet himself had either quite forgot it, or to keep his *booby* patron in countenance, mis-spells it—WILLAM.

XVII. AGREEMENT BETWEEN SHAK-
SPEARE AND HENRY CONDELL.

WE now come to similar articles of Agreement between Shakspeare, who is the grand proprietor and sole mover of the theatrical machine, and his fellow Henry Condell, executed on the 20th of May, 1610; by which he covenants “ for the further space or terme of three years to play upon *the* stage for the s^d W^m. Shakspeare alle comedyes *ande* tragedyes whiche he the s^d. W^m. Shakspeare may at any tyme during the s^d terme cause to be played *not written or composed by hymselfe butte are the writings or composytyons of others.*”

HIS salary is to be a *guinea* a week, not indeed in express words, being only “ oune ponde and oune shillynge per weeke.” Like Lowin, he is to be paid every Saturday night before twelve of the clock, sick or well, and whether he plays or not. If we add to this that he is to forfeit a hundred pounds if he does not perform the covenants expressed,¹⁶² we have the whole of this deed.

¹⁶² This penalty was copied from the contracts which I published between Philip Henslowe and those low actors whom

deed. And surely he must be a most unreasonable fellow not to perform them, the only covenants being that he shall play on the stage certain plays, and that whether he plays or not, he shall receive “oune pounce and oune shillynge” *every week in the year.*

IN this deed, as in the former, we find the word *composition* in the sense of a written work; and it also informs us that Condell was one third lower in estimation than Lowin. In what manner or by what arts the latter contrived thus to leap over the head of our poet's friend, Condell, whom he has particularly remembered in his will, and was the joint-editor of his Plays, we are not told. Certain however it is, that when Lowin was under the necessity of borrowing a crown to go a strolling into the country, Condell was in such repute that

whom he engaged to perform in his playhouse at a weekly stipend, as hirelings: and the same contracts also suggested the term of *three years*. [See SHAKSP. 1790, Vol. I. P. II. p. 311.] But actors of Condell's rank, who had a property in the house in which they were Sharers, entered into no bonds, as the hirelings did, for performance of Covenants, unless when a Company was *first* formed by a Speculator like Henslowe, when the contracting parties mutually tied themselves to each other.

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in the patent granted to Shakspeare and others in 1603, his name stands immediately after that of Heminges, and that so far from being a weekly hireling, he was a principal sharer of the profits made by the performances exhibited at the Globe and Blackfriars theatres, from that time to 1627, when he died.

THERE are several other curious circumstances belonging to this agreement. The first is, that poor Condell is made to covenant, not that he should exercise his faculty or quality of playing in a certain theatre called the Globe, &c. as we have just seen was the mode of the time, but that he should outdo even the aspiring БОТТОМ, and *perform an entire comedy or tragedy himself*. In Lowin's Agreement, it is observable that the same covenant is found. To reconcile therefore the two deeds, we must suppose that Condell, the Hotspur of those days, performed, as a mute, on the shoulders of his plump fellow-comedian, a species of exhibition to which Lowin was familiarized by occasionally playing the part of Falstaff, as the *double* of Heminges.—The next observable circumstance is, the mortal antipathy which our author appears

appears to have taken to his own dramas; for Condell is tied down to play only the comedies and tragedies written by other authors; so that we must suppose either that Shakspeare would never suffer one of his own pieces to be performed in his own playhouse, or that he bore such enmity to Condell, that he had made a fixed resolution that this actor should not *discharge* any part in them. The salary, “oune pounce and oune shillynge,” is a very proper periphrasis for that coin which was running in the head of the fabricator of this deed, and accords extremely well with the other ridiculous covenants; and that all should be in perfect harmony, the whole is concluded with a pretty fiction of a trim boar’s head, which is intended to pass for Shakspeare’s seal, and which we are to suppose he employed the Marchant of that day to engrave for him, in honour of the fat knight who in three of his plays had afforded to numberless spectators inexhaustible entertainment.

SOME years ago I published a copy of Henry Condell’s Will, extracted from the Registry in the Prerogative-office: but the bundle of original Wills for the year 1627 being unfortunately

unately lost, I have not been able to procure the autograph of this actor: ¹⁶³ happily however the deed itself sufficiently ascertains the nature of the fictitious signature affixed to it. If there be any such letter as is here made to represent an *H* in the signature “*H^y Condell,*” it has escaped not only my researches, but those of a very diligent examiner of ancient hand-writing, in whose work entitled *COURT-HAND RESTORED*, ¹⁶⁴ it is not found. It was manifestly formed on the ninth capital *I* found in the eighteenth Plate of that work, by a reversal and slight change of the letter.

THE indorsement on the deed now before us—“*20th Maye 9th: Iam^s :*” is at least as curious as any thing that is found in the

¹⁶³ As Condell lived, when he was in town, in Aldermanbury, where he served some of the parish offices, I hoped to have found his signature in the Register of that parish, but was disappointed. I was equally unsuccessful at Fulham, where he had a country house. The old Register of that parish is lost, but several of the Vestry Proceedings of a very ancient date are extant; in none of which, however, the name of Henry Condell occurs.

¹⁶⁴ Published by Mr. Andrew Wright of the Inner Temple, 4to. 1776.—The eighteenth Plate contains “*A general Alphabet of the old law hands.*”

inside of it ; for to say nothing of its being in English, (which I have already noticed as a circumstance fatal to all these instruments,) or of the unnecessary *th* after 20, (which Scriveners never wrote,) the deed itself has already informed us that it was made on the “ twentieth day of Maye in the *eyghth* year” of King James. When two such *great authorities* differ, to which of them are we to give credit? I conceive, in the present instance it will be safest to believe *neither*.

XVIII. A LEASE TO MICHAEL FRASER
AND HIS WIFE.

THE following deed was one of the earliest, if not the very first of all these instruments, which was exhibited to those “ ingenuous, intelligent, and disinterested persons,” on whose shoulders the weighty load of all this motley mass of trumpery has been laid. It is a Lease pretended to be made on the 14th of July, 1610, (8 Jac.) by which Shakspeare and his friend John *Heminges* (by the name of John *Hemynge*) demise to one Michael Fraser and his wife “ *his* two messuages or tenements (to which

of the two lessors the word *his* refers does not appear,) *abutting* close to the Globe theatre by Black Fryers London," - - " and also all those two Gardens on the North side of the same which appertayne or belong thereto, and whiche conteyne *six Acres and an half* be they more or less," for a term of sixty four years from the 29th of September next ensuing, at a rent of forty four pounds a year, to be paid half yearly, and the first payment to be made on the said 29th day of September.

HOWEVER our modern conveyancers may surpass their predecessors in the number of covenants or provisos, it will, I believe, be found that our ancient deeds, though brief and simple, were at least as clear, explicit, and correct, particularly in the description of the thing sold, demised, or granted, as the more ample and voluminous indentures of the present day. Here, however, we have a description of six acres and a half of land *abutting* close to the Globe theatre by Blackfryers; which is about as good a description, as if the ground on which the house of the present Earl Bathurst is built had been conveyed to the late earl, as

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" a certain

“ a certain piece of ground containing in front ninety feet, and in depth one hundred and twenty feet, on which the Inn known by the name of the HERCULES’ PILLARS now stands, *abutting close to Hyde-Park Corner by WHITECHAPEL.*”

IN detecting the fabrications of Chatterton it was curious to trace the mistakes he fell into, up to the authors from whose blunders they were derived. The present ridiculous blunder appears to have been derived from a mere error of the press in a book which our fabricator was very likely to examine, the *BIOGRAPHIA DRAMATICA*, published in 1780, where, under the article “ROBERT ARMIN,” he found the following words: “ This author was an actor at the *Globe*, *Black-Fryers*, and was living in 1611,” &c. The conjunction *and* having been inadvertently omitted by the compositor at the press, the theatre in Southwark was conceived to be close adjoining to Blackfriars, or this latter was supposed to be a larger and more general description of the quarter where the *Globe* theatre stood ; as we now say—Duke Street, St. James’s Square. It is observable, that in this deed *Blackfryers* is spelt rightly,

as it is in the book that led the fabricator into this error : whereas in the other deeds where that district is mentioned, he has spelt the word in the modern fashion, (as far as relates to the vowel in the second syllable) *Blackfryars*, contrary to the mode of orthography which prevailed in our author's time, and which was nearer to the etymology of the word (*frere*) ; this district being then constantly written with an *e* in the second syllable,*—*Blackfryers* ; or in two words, *blacke ffryers*.

THE phrase abutting *to*, here employed, is unknown to our language, abutting *upon* having been invariably the legal and colloquial language from the time of Shakspeare to this hour. On the phrase—the *Globe theatre*, having omitted to take notice of it where it was first introduced, (in the Promissory Note to Heminges,) I shall not insist here, reserving it for another place. It is only necessary now to mention, that the

* See the title-page of *OTHELLO*, 4to. 1622 ; the Conveyance from Walker to Shakspeare in the APPENDIX, N^o. II. or any book or MS. of the time of James the First in which this place is mentioned.

GLOBE, not the Globe *theatre*, was the uniform language of the time.¹⁶⁴

As it is not very easy to know on which side of the Thames these six acres and a half are supposed to have lain, it is necessary to take a view both of the district of the Blackfriars and the Bankside. In 1596 there was certainly in Southwark some ground unoccupied by buildings ; but it was chiefly in that part of it which lay more to the West than the Globe theatre, and which afterwards became the property of Thomas, Earl of Arundel, whose gardener, Cuper, renting the ground, it took the name of Cuper's Gardens. Even at an earlier period of the reign of Elizabeth the ground near where the Globe stood, seems to have been almost all occupied, though I do not doubt there may have been then some small gardens in that quarter. With respect to the Blackfriars, there were in that district some void spaces certainly, as is proved by the Conveyance to Shakspeare, already mentioned : but in general (as appears from ancient maps,) the ground on the east side of Fleet Ditch (where the theatre stood)

¹⁶⁴ See APPEND. N^o. I. note.

was

was almost wholly occupied by houses. To the west there appears to have been a considerable space of void ground about forty years before the date of this pretended Lease ; but this was in *Whitefriars*, with which we have no concern.—In six acres and a half there are thirty one thousand four hundred and sixty square yards, a space on which above three hundred houses might have been built ; as appears from a cause¹⁶⁵ of much celebrity which was tried in the last century, and which I shall presently have occasion to mention more particularly. Most assuredly neither near the *Globe*, nor in the *Blackfriars*, was there in the year 1610 void space sufficient to contain the fourth part of the number of edifices above mentioned. If however I were to allow that there might have been such an immense void space as would contain three hundred houses, either adjoining to the eastern end of *Maiden-lane* in *Southwark*, where the *Globe* stood, or in the precinct of the *Blackfriars* on the other side of the river, it would contribute nothing to the establishment of this fabricated instrument ; for till such an ancient build-

¹⁶⁵ Lady Ivy's case, 1684.

ing as *the Globe theatre by Blackfriars* shall be proved to have existed in the reign of James the First, together with six acres and a half adjoining to it, this deed must share the same fate with the rest.

MR. Pope, speaking of the early publishers of Shakspeare's works, has observed that their French is as bad as their Latin, and even their very Welch is false. A similar observation may be made on the papers and deeds before us. One finds it difficult to say in what circumstance the fabricator of them displays the most ignorance; whether his spelling is worse than his phraseology, or the incongruity of his fictions with the history and manners of the time be more observable than either. Even his law is all false.—“ Provided always (says this lease) that if the s^d. Mich^l. Fraser and Elizth. hys Wife theyr Ex^s. Ad^s. or Affligns or any of them do well and truly perform and keep all & singular the s^d. covenants herein before agreed upon, that then it shall and may be lawfull to and for the s^d. M^l. Fraser and Elizth. hys Wife to *enter* into and enjoy the same, but in case of non performance or non payment *of the same* that then

then it shall be lawfull to & for the s^d. *Willam* Shakespeare and John Hemyng again to have & enjoy the same."

IT is here observable, that previous to this proviso for the performance of *all & singular covenants*, no covenant has been mentioned except that for the payment of rent, *half yearly*. If however the lessees keep this covenant, what is the boon granted to them? Why truly to enter into the premisses and enjoy them: that is, these unfortunate people after they have paid half a year's rent on the 29th day of Sep. when their lease is to commence, and after they shall have regularly made several other half yearly payments, are, at the end I suppose of two or three years, to be quietly put in possession of the premisses. But "in case of non performance or non payment of the same," that is, in case they do not make several half yearly payments of rent before they get possession of the premisses, then the said *Willam* Shakspeare and John Hemyng are to re-enter *upon themselves*, and to be restored to that possession of which they never have been divested.

THE next clause is still more extraordinary. “ — And the said W^m. Shakespeare and John Hemynge for themselves theyr H^s. Ex^s. Ad^s. & Assigns shall and will clearly *exonerate and discharge from tyme to tyme the s^d. M^l. Fraser and Elizth. hys wyfe from the payment of such rent*, and well & sufficiently keep harmless the s^d. M^l. Fraser and Elizth. hys wife, theyr Ex^s. Ad^s. & Assigns & every of them, of & from all incumbres whatsoever by them the s^d. W^m. Shakespeare & In^o. Hemynge at any tyme before committed or done.”—As in the former part of this demise the lessees were somewhat hardly dealt with, in being obliged to make several half yearly payments of rent before they should be permitted to enter, it must be acknowledged that here ample compensation is made to them by an entire and total discharge and acquittance of all rent during the term.—The fabricator had heard that it was usual for the lessor to discharge, save and keep the lessees and the premises harmless from all former grants, leases, charges, and incumbrances whatsoever ; and to make the matter sure, instead of covenanting to give the lessees

from time to time proper acquittances, has made the lessors covenant wholly to exonerate and discharge them from the payment of any rent whatsoever.¹⁶⁶ Of this covenant the only precedent I have been able to find in our law-books, after a long search, is

¹⁶⁶ What was *meant* here, would in the time of James the First have been thus expressed:—“ And the said W. S. & I. H. for themselves, &c. do covenant, that they, their executors, &c. shall from time to time, and at all times, well and sufficiently discharge, save & keep harmless, as well the s^d M. F. & E. his wife, their executors, &c. as also the said Messuages, & all other the premises by these presents mentioned to be demised, with all & singular their appurtenances, & every part & parcel thereof, of and from all & singular former grants, bargains, sales, leases, charges, & incumbrances whatsoever, had, made, granted, &c. And also shall save harmless the said M. F. &c. their executors, &c. & the said Messuages, &c. of and from all & all manner of quit-rents, annuities & rent-charges whatsoever, issuing or going out, or to be issuing or going out, of the same or any part thereof, *other than the said yearly rent of 44*l.* reserved by these presents, yearly to be paid for the said messuages & other the premises.* And that *upon every payment made of the said yearly rent, or any part thereof, to the said W. S. or I. H. their executors or assigns, by the said M. F. & E. their executors, &c. according to the tenor and true meaning of these presents, the said W. S. or I. H. their executors or assigns, shall and will subscribe to such a reasonable writing or acquittance as the said M. F. and E. their executors or administrators shall reasonably require, testifying and declaring the receipt of the said payment.*”

one in the *PUZZLED CLERK'S GUIDE*, by Mr. Serjeant Grimgribber, whose works, though now superseded by the more refined jurisprudence of modern times, were in some request before the statute which directed all legal proceedings to be in English, and in the early part of the present century are cited with respect in Sir Richard Steele's Reports.

IN addition to all this nonsensical jargon, we find at the end of this lease,—“ In witnesse whereof the s^d Ptes to these Indres interchangeablie have sett their hands & seales the daye & yeare first above written : Anno-Dom (1610).” Now even in so small a matter as this, fiction has betrayed itself ; for this was not the abbreviation of the time, but either Anno Dñi., or A. Dñi., or An. Dñi.—At the back we find—“ 14th July 5 Jam^s.”, for which in the *ERRATA* we are desired to read—“ 8 Jam^s.”, which is not a whit better than the other. It should be as I have already observed,—8 Jac.

THROUGHOUT this deed, as in the conclusion of the contract with Lowin, we have

Willam Shakspeare, and for the reason already assigned. But as in the former case the Scribe would not keep his employer in countenance by writing his christian name in his own absurd way, so here, to punish him for his oscitancy or his perverseness, our poet leaves him in the lurch, subscribing his name to this deed, in plain and legible characters, WILLIAM Shakspeare.

XIX. A DEED OF TRUST TO JOHN
HEMYNGE.

WE are at length arrived at the last legal instrument presented to us in this new ANTHOLOGY, which is a Deed of Trust pretended to have been made by our poet to John *Hemynge*, (as he is here improperly called,) on the 23d day of February 1611-12, the consideration of which necessarily demands particular attention. All the absurdities and incongruities, which have been already noticed, must now yield the palm to superior absurdity and incongruity; the thickest Cimmerian darkness being bright sunshine compared with the vapid nonsense and impenetrable obscurity of this fabrication.

IT

IT sets out with informing us that Shakspeare, on the day above mentioned, had not yet retired to the country ; an important piece of information, could we rely on our informer. In the deed of purchase and mortgage in the next year, March 10 and 11, 1612-13, (I am now speaking of genuine deeds,) he is described as of Stratford *upon*¹⁶⁷ Avon, from whence I am inclined to believe that he had then retired from the stage.

SOME years ago I conjectured that he had originally some slight knowledge of law, and particularly of the lower branches of conveyancing ; and I have since found no reason to think that my conjecture was ill-founded. He was at the supposed time of making this deed living in intimacy with Mr. Francis Collins, an eminent attorney who practised both at Stratford and Warwick, and who was a witness to his Will, which, without doubt, Collins drew. I must also observe, that our poet had a cousin, who at this time had chambers in

¹⁶⁷ Not “ *on Avon,*” as we find it in this and several other of these deeds.

the Middle-Temple, Mr. Thomas Greene, a barrister, or solicitor in Chancery,¹⁶⁸ with whom he was connected by friendship as well as blood. Thus circumstanced, he is made to preface the deed before us with these words: “ *Having founde muche wickedness amongst those of the lawe and not liking to leave matters at theyre wills, I have herein named a trusty and tried friende who shall afterr mye dethe execute withe care myne orderrs herein given.*”

I SHALL not stay to observe on the modern expression,—“ not liking to *leave matters* at theyre wills:” but the reason assigned for his making this deed, his “having founde muche wickedness amongst those of the law,” is well worthy of notice. Had tradition informed us that, like Dekker, Jonson, and many other poets of the time,¹⁶⁹ he

¹⁶⁸ In one of his papers he mentions his having attended Sir Edw. Coke on law-business, in terms that seem to denote that he was a Solicitor; but in the superscription of letters addressed to him, he is styled Thomas Greene, *Esq.* an addition not then given to solicitors, or attorneys at law.—He expressly calls our author—“ my cousin Shakspeare.”

¹⁶⁹ “ Lent unto Thomas Downton the 30 of Janewary 1598 to descarge Thomas Dickers from the areaste of my lord chamberlenes men, I saye lent—— iij^l. xs.” “ Lent

he had been in any part of his life necessitous and embarrassed, and that in consequence he had felt the strong gripe of the law, that is, had the whole history of his life and character been the reverse of what it was, such a reflection might perhaps have been plausibly ascribed to him: but that the gentle, ingenuous, honest, wealthy, and liberal Shakspeare should transmit to pos-

“ Lent unto the Company the 4 of Febreary 1598 to discharge Mr. Dicker out of the counter in the poultre, the some of fortie shillinges I say dd. [delivered] to Thomas Downton—xxxxs.”

In another place, as I remember, Mr. Henslowe redeems Dekker out of the *Clinke*; but I cannot at present find the passage.

“ Lent unto Bengemen Johnson player the 28 of July 1597 in Redey money the some of fower powndes to be payd yt agayne when so ever ether I or any for me shall demande yt, I saye—iiij^{li}.”

“ Witness E. Alleyn & John Synger.”

“ Lent Bengemyne Johnson the 5 of Janewary 1597 [1597-8] in Redy mony the some of—vs.”

“ Lent unto Thomas Downton the xvij of Janewary 1598 to lend unto harey chettell to paye his charges in the Marshallsey, the some of—xxxxs.”

Henslowe's Register, MS.

Henry Chettle was author of above thirty plays, of which the only one now extant (entirely written by him,) is THE TRAGEDY OF HOFFMAN; printed anonymously in 1631.

terity

terity such a malevolent and unfounded stigma on a most useful and honourable profession, with some of whose members he was at the same moment living in great amity, is utterly incredible.

BUT let us now hear his reasons for making this deed. He has already told us that he relies on a trusty friend to execute his orders. “ BUT in case I shoulde at any tyme hereafterr make a Will as perrchaunce I shall in manner of forme I have lefte some things nott herein given or disposedd of that maye serve to fylle upp said Will and thereby cause no hyndraunce in the Executyonn of thys mye deede of gifte. But sho^d. I nott chaunce make a will thenn I doe give all suche things afs^d. not herein ment^d. unto mye lovyng Daughterr and her heyres for everr.—Firste untoe mye deare Wife I doe orderr as folowithe thatt she bee payde withinne oune monthe afterre mye dethe the somme of oune hondrythe and fowre score Pounds fromm the moneys whyche be nowe *layinge* onn Accompte of the Globe Theatre in the hands of Master John Hemyng Also I doe give herr mye suyte of grey vellvett *edged* withe silverr tog^r. withe
mye

mye lyttelle Cedarr Trunke in wyche there bee three Ryngs oune lyttel payntyng of *myselfe* in a silverr Case & sevens letters wrottenn to her before oure *marryage* these I doe beg herr toe keepe safe if everr she dydd love me.—To mye deare Daughterr who hathe alwaye demeaned *herrsselfe* well I doe give as folowithe the somme of twentye Pounds and sevenne shylyngs thys muste bee payde herr withinne two Months afterr mye dethe & for raysyng s^d. summe of 20^l. & sevenne shylyngs I doe herebye orderr Masterr hemyngge toe sell mye share of the two houses neare the Globe butt sho^d. that nott be enough thenne I doe herebye orderr him toe make it upp oute of the Moneys inn hys hands onne Accompte of the Theatre.—I doe allso give herr mye suyte of blacke silke & the Rynge whyche I doe alwaye weare givenne toe mee by hys *Grace* of Southampton thys I doe beg herr as she dothe love mee neverr toe parte fromm.”

BEFORE we examine the different clauses of this nonsensical passage, allow me to give your Lordship a clew that may enable you to find your way out of this labyrinth of folly and imposture. As every thing

that relates to Shakspeare is interesting, we are not to wonder that some observations have been made on the last solemn act of his life, his Will, which was executed on the 25th of March 1616, a month before he died. It has particularly been remarked that at first he had taken no notice whatsoever of his wife, and when he did recollect or was reminded of her, he left her no other memorial of his affection but his “second-best bed with the furniture.”¹⁷⁰ From this and some other circumstances it has been conjectured, not without probable ground, that he was not very strongly attached to her. Another observation naturally arises on the perusal of his Will; that he had a stronger affection for his eldest daughter Susanna, who in the year 1607 was married to Dr. John Hall, an eminent physician of Stratford, than for his second daughter Judith, who not long before his death married, I believe without his approbation, Mr. Thomas Queeny, who in the researches which I made there some years

¹⁷⁰ It was long supposed that he had bequeathed her his *brown best bed*; but by examining and collating the *original Will*, I discovered that the donation (which at best denoted no great kindness,) was still less valuable.

ago to obtain materials for our poet's Life, I found was a Vintner in that town. On these observations, naturally suggested by Shakspeare's Will, and stated in the edition which I had the honour to present to the publick, the Instrument before us was constructed ; ¹⁷¹ with a view at the same time to cover and give some collateral strength and authenticity, not only to the lock of hair, love-letters, and pictures, already noticed, but to all such trumpery of the same kind as the credulity of the town at any future period might digest.

PASSING over the orthography of this deed, which is like that of all the rest, I shall confine myself to the instrument itself. What in plain English is the meaning of the passage which I have transcribed ? Our poet thinks it not improbable that he shall

¹⁷¹ How then, I suppose it will be said, came it to pass, that the fabricator has here made our poet mention his wife with kindness, and bequeath her a considerable sum of money ? Either on the principle adopted in many other places, to surprize by novelty, or (which is more probable,) because it had been suggested that Shakspeare, previous to the making of his Will, had made some provision for his wife.

make a Will, in which however he foresees there may be some defects and omissions ; and therefore he gives certain things *not* mentioned in this deed, (what they are some Ædipus must inform us,) which may supply the deficiencies of the last solemn act of his life. But if he should not make a Will, then he gives all things *aforesaid* (though nothing whatsoever has been specified) unto his *lovyng daughter*. To this same “ deare daughterr, who hathe alway demeaned *herrselse* well,” he gives the sum of twenty pounds and seven shillings, &c. This CODICIL to an unmade Will surely surpasses any instance of Second Sight that ever has been recorded in Scotland.

THERE is no maxim of law better established than that every gift should be *certain* ; and, like many other rules of law, it is adopted, because it is agreable to reason and common sense. A gift therefore “ to his dear daughter who had always demeaned herself well,” would have been absolutely void, for these words denote that he had more daughters than one ; and this kind
of

of ambiguity being what Lord Verulam calls *patens*,¹⁷² or appearing to be ambiguous upon the deed or instrument, cannot be holpen by averment, or parol evidence to shew which of his daughters he meant: for that (says Bacon) “ were to make all deeds hollow and subject to averments, and so in effect that to pass without deed, which the law appoints shall not pass but by deed.”—For the sum given (twenty pounds seven shillings) no probable reason can be assigned, all gifts of this kind, or legacies, being usually even sums. The fabricator, however, of this instrument seeing that in Shakspeare’s Will, and other old Wills, legacies of twenty-six shillings and eight pence, or thirteen pounds six shillings and eight pence, &c. were bequeathed, supposed these were odd sums; whereas in fact, and in the contemplation of the testator, they were as much even sums as our modern five, ten, or twenty pounds; for the former sum (11. 6s. 8d.) was *two marks*, and the latter (13l. 6s. 8d.) which is Shakspeare’s bequest to his friend Francis Collins, was exactly *twenty marks*.

¹⁷² MAXIMS OF THE LAW. Reg. 23.

As therefore in the stage-contracts and the promissory note (given almost a century before it was known) the even sums of one pound one shilling, and five pounds five shillings, (*even*, so far as they correspond with the present current gold coin of the realm,) were *primo intuitu* suspicious, and when attended with other circumstances of imposture were more than suspicious; so in the present deed the uneven sums of twenty pounds and seven shillings given to Shakspeare's dear daughter, thirty-seven shillings given to Master Shancke, and forty-nine shillings to Master Rice, are all equally objectionable, and manifest denotations of fiction.

THE sum of twenty pounds and seven shillings is ordered to be paid to his dear daughter two months after his death, (the regulation of a Will, instead of a deed of gift,¹⁷³) and how does your Lordship think

¹⁷³ "If a gift does not take effect by delivery of immediate possession, it is then not properly a gift, but a contract, and this a man cannot be compelled to perform but upon good and sufficient consideration." 2 Blackst. Com. 441.

There being no consideration expressed here, the whole deed, were it even to be considered as a deed, would have been void: but it is a Will rather than a deed of gift.

it

it is to be raised?—To raise this little sum, Shakspeare's trusty friend, Heminges, is not to put his hand into the chest of which we shall hear more presently, but to sell our author's moiety of his estate near THE GLOBE BY BLACKFRIARS (for it seems he had but a moiety of it, though in the lease to Fraser and his wife the whole is called his); and if the sale of this moiety should not produce twenty pounds and seven shillings, then the deficiency is to be made good out of money in Heminges' hands.

IN the year 1612 an estate in houses was commonly sold at the lowest at twelve years purchase, and an estate in land at about sixteen.¹⁷⁴ At twelve years' purchase Shakspeare's pretended moiety of this estate, which consisted of both land and houses, and was let for sixty-one years at 4*l.* per annum, would have produced a sum of two hundred and sixty-four pounds at the least: and yet the owner, who we shall presently find is a most excellent *counter-*

¹⁷⁴ Briefe, easie, and necessarie Tables for the valuation of Leases, &c. 8vo. 1622.

caster,

caster, is here made to doubt whether it will supply about the thirteenth part of that sum.

As the “*Rynge givenne by hys Grace of Southampton*” was mentioned to give countenance and support to the correspondence between him and our poet, which had before been *brought forward*, so in the gift to his *dear* wife, “the sevens letterrs wrotten to her before oure marryage,” the “three Ryngs,” “oune lyttell payntyng of *myselfe* in a silver case,” and the “lyttelle Cedarr Trunke,” were all introduced in this last instrument, (for it was the *L’envoy* of all these fictions,) with a view to afford a friendly cover to the washed drawing, and the amorous effusions of our poet, with which the world had previously been gratified. Nothing therefore need be said of them. All the money bequeathed to her, (for so I must call it,) as well as the other sums afterwards mentioned, are to be drawn out of the fund now *layinge*¹⁷⁵ in Heminges’

¹⁷⁵ For this vulgarism the fabricator is answerable; for though it is a very old one, it occurs, I think, no where in our author’s plays.

hands “ onn accompte of the Globe Theatre :” so that we are to suppose that the playhouse in Blackfriars produced nothing ; whereas the fact is, that from about the year 1605 *that* was the place of exhibition during a great part of the year, and they played at the Globe only for a short time in the summer.

AFTER the detection of Chatterton, and the demolition of the chest with six keys, I did not expect to have heard again, for some time at least, of such a repository for ancient Manuscripts : from a similar receptacle, however, the *unknown* gentleman is hardy enough to draw all his *speciosa miracula* ; for an OAKEN CHESTE at the Globe playhouse, it seems, contained not only our poet’s theatrical, but his domestick wardrobe, his love-letters to his wife, (for though he did not, like one of Congreve’s coxcombs, write letters to himself, we find he kept the letters he had written to her, *among the playhouse stuff*, she, poor woman, all the while remaining quietly at Stratford,) rings, pictures, caskets, and plays of all sorts, new and old.

IT is irksome to me to dwell longer on this foolish deed ; yet it still demands some further animadversion. When plays were sold to the theatre, which was the practice of our author's time, they became the property of the house, that is, of the Sharers who constituted the company ; who though they did not purchase them in the first instance, (the money being paid by the proprietor of the building, at the appointment of four or five of them nominated for this purpose,) afterwards acquired the property of the copies by reimbursing the proprietor for this and all other expences defrayed by him.¹⁷⁵ Shakspeare therefore well knew that he had no title to any of his plays then in the hands of his associates ; yet in this deed he distributes them about most liberally ; that is, he very bountifully gives to individuals what already belonged to them all collectively. At that time no

¹⁷⁵ " Alsoe wee have paid him for plaie-books 200^{li}. or thereabouts, and yet he denies to give us the copies of anye one of them."

From a paper drawn up by Joseph Taylor and other players, entitled " Articles of Grievance and Oppression against Mr. Hinchlowe," MS.

notion

notion of literary property was entertained, unless where a particular licence to print and vend certain books for a limited time was granted by the Crown. In this deed, however, all the provisions and regulations relative to our author's plays printed and in manuscript, are founded on the now received idea of literary property to a certain extent vested in *authors* or their assigns by the statute of Queen Anne.

THAT all might be of a piece, the various donations to the several actors named, are as absurd, capricious, and incongruous, as those to his wife and daughter. To the obscure Cowley, we are told, he gives his *Tempeste*, his *Mydsommers dreme*, *Macbeth*, *Henry VIII.* and his *altered* playe of *Titus Andronicus*; and “*sbo^d they bee everre agayne Impryntedd,*” he desires it may be done from these his “true writtenn playes,” and that all the profits of such new imprinting may belong to Cowley. The plain and direct meaning of the words “*sbo^d they bee everre agayne impryntedd*” is, that at the time of making this pretended deed, (23 Febr. 1611-12,) these five plays had appeared in print; but the *TEMPEST*,

MACBETH, and HENRY VIII. were not printed till about ten years afterwards, being first published by John Heminges, here named, and Henry Condell, in 1623, when for the first time they were entered in the books of the Stationers' Company.¹⁷⁶ This circumstance alone would defeat the deed before us. In the History of the Stage I ascertained that there was an old play entitled TITUS ANDRONICUS, played by the servants of Lord Sussex at the theatre belonging to Philip Henslowe, in January 1593-4. From this circumstance, and Heminges' having admitted a play with this title to stand among Shakspeare's works, it is, I think, manifest that he made some alterations and additions to that piece, as I have shewn he did in the second and third part of KING HENRY THE SIXTH. Hence the mention in this deed of "my *altered* play of Titus Andronicus." I state

¹⁷⁶ See the Register of the Stationers' Company,—“ Nov. 8, 1623, Mr. Blount and Isaak Jaggard.—Mr. William Shakespeares Comedyes and Tragedyes, soe many of the said copies as are not formerly entered to other men: Viz. The Tempest, - - Henry Eight, - - - Macbeth,” &c. &c.

SHAKSP. 1790. Vol. I. P. I. p. 259.

this

this minute circumstance, because it, as well as many others that I have noticed, prove, that the greater part of these fabrications was made subsequent to November 1790, when that History was published.

IN the year 1600 the play of SIR JOHN OLDCASTLE was printed, and ascribed to Shakspeare, whose name appears at full length in the title-page. It was always considered as an imposture, but was never certainly known to be such till I produced an entry from an old theatrical Register of the precise sum paid to the four poets who were the authors of that piece.¹⁷⁷ We do not, however, find that on the publication of this play, the careless Shakspeare, who, as Pope most truly and happily described him,

“ For gain, not glory, wing’d his roving flight,
 “ And grew immortal in his own despite,”

took any step to vindicate his reputation, on this head; nor did he, as he might easily have done, mention in his Will that

¹⁷⁷ Anthony Mundy, Michael Drayton, R. Wilson, and R. Hathwaye.

several

several dramattick pieces had been fraudulently ascribed to him. After his retirement from the stage he did not think his works worth collecting, at least he never did collect or publish them ; nor did he even leave a fair correct copy of them in manuscript to his children. Such was the man who is here represented as extremely anxious that the future impressions of his plays may be printed from his true copies.

IN the Essay on the Chronological Order of his Plays, I had occasion to quote a passage from Meres's WITS TREASURY, in which Anthony Mundy, a dramattick poet of the day, is spoken of as "*our best plotter.*" Hence we have here a donation of 5l. and the four following plays,—"*mye Moche adoe aboute noethynge, The Wives of Windsor, Rycharde y^e 3^d as allso mye Coryolanus, to Masterr Lowinne, oure beste Actorr.*" Lowin, I have already shewn, was in a very low state in the year 1604, only eight years before the date of this deed ; and instead of being considered as the best actor in our author's life-time, he undoubtedly did not rise into the first parts till after the death of Shakspeare and Burbadge,

badge, and the retirement of Heminges and Condell.¹⁷⁸ All the writers of the time who have left us any memorials of the stage, concur in informing us that at this time not Lowin, but Burbadge, who is here passed over without any eulogy, was the principal actor of the Blackfriars and Globe Theatre. He was, we know from the testimony of Bishop Corbet,¹⁷⁹ and other documents, the original representative of Richard the Third; and therefore if the copy of that play had been in our poet's disposal, which it was not, to him both justice and gratitude might have directed it. Sir Richard Baker, who was born in 1568, and lived till 1644-5, and had therefore an opportunity of marking the progress of his reputation through the whole of his theatrical career, pronounces him to have been such an actor "as no age must look to see the like." In the very next year after the date of this deed, his reputation and his property placed him in so high a rank, that the King's Servants are called by

¹⁷⁸ See p. 251.

¹⁷⁹ See his *ITER BOREALE*, and an old comedy entitled *THE RETURNE FROM PARNASSUS*, 4to. 1606.

a very intelligent and accurate writer of that time, “ Bourbege his Companie ; ”¹⁸⁰ and six years afterwards, when he died, he is styled by Camden “ *alter Roscius.* ”¹⁸¹ Though our author, as I have already observed, is somewhat niggard of his praise to this eminent tragedian, he gives him from the OAKENN CHESTE not only the plays of CYMBELINE and OTHELLO, but a play which we have never seen, called the VIRGINN QUENE, his “ *chosē* interlude nevrer yette impryntedd,” which had been acted only three times before her namesake, “ y^e profyotts fromm *prynting* same to bee whollye for s^d Burbage.”

HENRY Condell, who at his death was a man of good property, and who at the time when this deed is pretended to have been made must have been in easy circumstances, was, we find, indebted to Shakspeare in so small a sum as three pounds nine shillings, which he very kindly forgives him ; and

¹⁸⁰ Letter from Mr. Thomas Lorkin to Sir Thomas Puckering, Knight and Baronet, dated the last of June, 1613. MSS. Harl. 7002.

¹⁸¹ R. JAC. ANNAL. sub ann. 1619.

with

with equal liberality our poet sends three pounds and a gold ring after his “good Kempe,” who appears to have been then dead.¹⁸²

THE next donation, or legacy, is somewhat unlucky, for it is “toe my pleasaunte and *witty* Masterr Armyne,” an actor who, I have shewn, usually performed the part of a Clown. Now if the fabricator of this deed had followed the eulogium with which I furnished him, and called him “honest *gamesome* Master Armin,” he would have been safe. But, poor man, “he would be talking,” and has stumbled on a word that bore no such meaning as was here intended to be affixed to it.¹⁸³

THE gifts to Shanke and Rice,¹⁸⁴ two
low

¹⁸² SHAKSP. *ut. supr.* Vol. I. P. II. p. 197.

¹⁸³ See p. 206.

¹⁸⁴ The “greene *sloppd* suyte of velvette,” which is given to Rice, is just as intelligible as if a man at this day were to bequeath to his servant his “*breeched suit* of blue cloth.” *Slops* was the ancient term for large breeches. So, Falstaff: “What said Mr. Dombledon about the sattin for my short cloak and *slops*?” The green velvet suit here mentioned had doubtless a pair of white sattin breeches sewed on each

low players, are chiefly observable for the absurd sums allotted to them ; to one 37 shillings in money, and 18 shillings to buy a ring, and 39 shillings to another. No number of nobles or marks will make any of these sums.

OUR author in the last place rewards his trusty friend John Hemynge (as he is here called) for *managing all his matters* at the Globe ; for he was such a driveller that he could do nothing for himself ; and as for the Blackfriars theatre, though he at this time derived almost his entire profits from it, he does not think it worth mentioning. As a “ *recompence*” for all Heminges’ good services, he is to have “ y^e somm of 10l. & 20 shylyngs to buye hymm a Golde Ryng,” and the following plays out of the CHESTE: “ Mye Gentlemenn of Verona *alterrd*,¹⁸⁵ mye Measure for Measure, Comedye

of the sleeves by way of ornament.—The fabricator seems to have thought if he could but introduce an ancient word, all would be well : whether it was sense or nonsense was no part of his consideration ; or rather was quite beyond his *ken*.

¹⁸⁵ This word was added in consequence of the suggestion of Hanmer and Upton, that THE GENTLEMEN
OF

medye of Errorrs, Merrchaunte of Venice, togetherr with my newe Playe neverr yette *imprynted* (he is still “ at his old *lunes*”) called Kyng H^v vii.”¹⁸⁶

THERE still remains in the hands of Heminges precisely the sum of 287l. 14s. od. by which we learn how admirable an arithmetician our poet was : this sum there-

OF VERONA was not entirely of the hand of Shakspeare ; a notion for which, in my opinion, there is not the slightest foundation.

¹⁸⁶ In a note on the Dissertation on the Three Parts of K. Henry VI. I observed that several portions of the English History had been dramatized before the time of Shakspeare ; (EDWARD I. II. and III. HENRY IV. and V. &c.) and that he was induced by the popularity of those pieces to make some of the principal historical events of preceding times the subject of various plays. Hence we have here—“ Kyng Henry VII. ;” in a former deed, “ Kyng Henrye thyrde of Englande ;” and another, which, we are told, yet remains in the *oakenn cheste*, “ Kyng Henrye Seconde of Englande.”—But the device is somewhat of the stalest ; for a tricking bookseller in 1653 entered at the Stationers’ Hall—“ Henry I. and Henry II. by William Shakspeare and Robert Davenport ;” how honestly, will appear from an entry in the Office-book of Sir Henry Herbert, Master of the Revels to King James and King Charles the First, MS. “ For the Kings Company. The Historye of Henry the First, written by Dampport, [the old pronounciation of Davenport,] the 10 of April, 1624.—1l. os. od.”

fore and “ the eyghte Playes thatt bee styll
 inne s^d Cheste as allso mye otherr Playe
 nevrer yett Impryntedd called Kynge Vor-
 tygerne” are appropriated to the use of
 the child of whom he and Heminges had
 “ spokenne butt who muste not bee named
 here.” This child, I presume, was Shak-
 speare’s Godson, young Will. D’Avenant ;
 and I fear I am answerable for his having
 been thus again *brought forward* to publick
 notice, by having stated that there were
 good grounds for supposing him our poet’s
 natural son ; a tradition first mentioned by
 Wood in a MS. now lost, and of which I
 have lately found a strong confirmation in
 the biographical papers of Mr. Aubrey at
 Oxford.¹⁸⁷ The poor lad, however, never
 derived any benefit from his supposed fa-
 ther’s kindness ; for about six years after
 the date of this deed he became a chorister
 of Magdalen College, where nearly thirty
 pounds a year (the interest of 287l.) beside
 the profit of these eight plays, and above
 all the *copy-right* of that matchless piece

¹⁸⁷ Of the whole of Aubrey’s biographical collections,
 deposited in the Ashmolean Museum, I made a transcript
 last summer, which will hereafter be laid before the
 publick.

“ Kynge

“Kynge Vortygerne” would in those days have supported him very well in a higher rank. Of this last fiction also, I fear, I have been (though very innocently) the cause; by mentioning that a play with this title was acted in 1593 at the Rose theatre, by the Earl of Pembroke’s servants.

OUR poet concludes this important instrument by declaring that he trusts to his “freynd John Hemynges *honorr*,” (a phrase which he foresaw would come into use after his death,) “and allso onn hys promys of beyng clouse of speche inn thys laste Matterr.”—On the back we look in vain for the name of a Scrivener among the Witnesses; ¹⁸⁸ but, by way of compensation, we have, as before, the year of the king’s reign in English—“9 James.”

IT will naturally be asked, how came it to pass that none of the actors here men-

¹⁸⁸ I do not mean to say that *all* deeds were attested by the Scriveners who drew them; or that this deed is proved by the circumstance here mentioned to be a forgery. It was, however, the general practice.

tioned

tioned availed themselves of these valuable gifts on the death of our author, at which time they might very properly claim them, though no specifick time of delivering the plays, I think, is mentioned. Shakspeare without doubt, would notify to his friends his kind intentions towards them. Why did not Burbadge, and the rest, immediately after his death print the TEMPEST, MACBETH, OTHELLO, &c. which had been so long withheld by “the *grand possessors*,” and for which doubtless the retired scholars of Oxford and Cambridge who had it not in their power to visit the metropolis, were exceedingly impatient? Why at least, did not Mrs. Shakspeare receive her own letters, the “rings and things” and all the other *bravery* here mentioned? The answer is “as ready as a barber’s chair;” that faithless villain, John Heminges, never fulfilled the trust reposed in him. Why, however, did not some of the actors institute a suit against him, to enforce a specifick execution of this trust? To this question I know not what answer will be given. Why again, it may be said, did not this unprincipled Trustee destroy the deed, so as to
 save

save himself at least from future infamy ? Or if he only suppressed it, and the parties interested knew nothing of the kindness intended to them, why did not Heminges in the fourteen years which he survived our poet, produce for his own benefit some of these virgin plays at the Globe or Blackfriars ; and why were they not printed in the Collection of our author's works ? If again, they were unaccountably neglected, and made no use of whatsoever, why have they not all come down to us along with the deed that relates to them ; and why have they not been *brought forward* ? This last is, however, a very dangerous question ; for in good time I make no doubt we shall have them all.—But most unluckily for this fine hypothesis of the dishonesty of poor Heminges, a real deed has been discovered since I began this Inquiry, to which I have already alluded, and by which it appears that he did very honourably on the 10th of February 1617-18, fulfill the only trust (as far as we know) that Shakspeare ever reposed in him. This deed being important, both in this respect, and as having furnished us with the genuine autograph of
that

that Actor, I shall subjoin it by way of Appendix¹⁸⁹ to these sheets.

HAVING now gone through all this *farrago* of papers and deeds, I should in due form proceed to the copy of “Kynge Leare” and a fragment of “Hamblette,” which in fact form the most bulky part of the extraordinary volume lately presented to the publick. But three words on this subject will suffice. Had the fabricator of this piece been content to exhibit it as a play-house copy that by good fortune had escaped the ravages of time, it might, if genuine, have been a curiosity at least to the editors of Shakspeare’s works: but he has gone a step further, and has ventured

¹⁸⁹ See the APPENDIX, N^o. III.—Why John Heminges was made a trustee by our author, when he purchased his estate in Blackfriars, is not very clear. He did not execute the only part of the deed of conveyance now extant, though he is a party named in it; and the estate would with equal certainty have descended to Shakspeare’s daughters, or followed the directions of his Will, without the aid of Heminges.—These trustees seem to have succeeded the old feoffees to uses, of the former age.

to write in the first page—" Tragedye [not *The Tragedye*] of Kyng Leare isse *fromme* Masterre *Hollinnesbedde* I have *inne* somme lyttle *deparretedde fromme hymme butte thatte* LIBBERTYE will *notte* I truste be blamedde bye mye gentle *Readerres*. — W^m Shakspeare."—In this case therefore—" *AUT ERASMUS, AUT DIABOLUS,*" — may be fairly applied: if it is not of Shakspeare's own hand, it is nothing.

SOME gentlemen, I find, have taken the trouble to collate several passages of this spurious piece with the most authentick copies. For my part, I have not collated nor ever shall collate a single line of it, excepting only the speech which I shall presently transcribe. Life is not long enough to be wasted in the examination of such trash, when almost a single glance is sufficient to shew that it is a plain and palpable forgery, written by the same hand which fabricated all the other deeds and papers that have been already examined. To prove this decisively, it is only necessary to quote a passage from it. Being possessed of the original quarto copy of this play, your Lordship knows that in consequence

of being printed from a playhouse transcript, made by some ignorant person, it is the most corrupt of any of the quartos : and yet with all its faults, it is of great service in correcting in certain places the errors of the folio. I suppose it will be allowed that Shakspeare knew verse from prose, and sense from nonsense, and that therefore he could not have written with his own hand any play in which metrical speeches are written unmetrically, and the most ridiculous blunders occur in every page. Take as a specimen the following passage, which many months ago was mentioned to me as a standard by which all the rest of the piece might be truly estimated :

“ *ALB.* Whats the Matterre Sir

LEARE. Marke mee Ile telle the life ande deathe

[I amme

ashamd thou hast powerre toe shake mye Mann-

[hoode

thusse thatte these hotte teares thatte breake fromme

mee perreforce shoud *make worse* blasts ande foggs

onne the *unnetennederre* woundynges of a Fatherres

usse playe thys parte agayne *Ile plucke ye oute*

and easte you with the Waterres thatte you maye

temperre claye.”

THUS

THUS *clearly and intelligibly* is this speech exhibited as written *by our poet's own hand*, instead of the following *stuff*, which the foolish player-editors have substituted in its room :

ALB. What's the matter, Sir ?

LEAR. I'll tell thee ;—Life and death ! I am
asham'd [To Goneril.

That thou hast power to shake my manhood thus :
That these hot tears, which breake from me per-
force,
Should make *thee worth them*.—Blasts and fogs
upon thee !

The *untented* woundings of a father's curse
Pierce every sense about thee !—*Old fond eyes*,
Beweep this cause again, I'll pluck you out,
And cast you with the waters that you *lose*,
To temper clay.

IT has been suggested¹⁹⁰ that the only archetype the fabricator of this piece had at first before him was the second folio. Whether this was the case, I shall never take the trouble to examine. Certainly, however, that spurious and adulterated copy of our author's plays was very “german to the

¹⁹⁰ LETTER to George Steevens, Esq. *ut supr.*

matter" in hand, and was very properly chosen for the basis of a new fiction. Afterwards he is supposed to have got one of the early quartos for his model ; but it is much more probable that those very rare editions were beyond his reach, and that he used the re-impression of them published in 1766. It is of no consequence how the forgery was effected. As the whole of this play is in the hand-writing *assigned* to Shakspeare in the MISCELLANEOUS PAPERS, and as it is manifest that it cannot be genuine, on the single ground which I have stated, (without embarrassing the question with the consideration of the absurd orthography used throughout,) it follows necessarily that it is an absolute forgery : for the stickler for its authenticity, or its value in any way, is precluded, for the reasons already given, from changing his ground, and saying that, though it is not of Shakspeare's own hand-writing, it is an old playhouse copy of this admirable tragedy.

THE speech of Kent in the last scene of this play having been thought by the commentators too short and bald, in vamping
this

this piece, two lines which the poet has allotted to him have been beaten out and amplified into seven ; and though the verses which have been supplied are not better than any school-boy who had ever composed a line of poetry could write, for want of better arguments they have been quoted as teeming with energy and pathos.

THAT all might be consistent and of a piece from the first to the last, the lines throughout are numbered in the margin, a practice unexampled in our author's time ; and Shakspeare, who in none of his plays has ever mentioned what author he followed, is made here to tell his *readers* (still with a view to *the press*) where he found his story, and to apologize for the *liberty* he has taken in departing from the Historian ; a word not used in that sense till long after his death. The term of his age (here required) was *licence*.—That this piece might have two *car-marks*, he subscribes his name to it, by way of prelude, I suppose, to a similar subscription to KYNGE VORTIGERNE.

I HAVE but little more to say on the subject of this play, but it is material,
being

being equally applicable to all the other manuscripts which have been examined. The editor has informed us that the paper on which it is written exhibits more than twenty different paper-marks. I have already taken notice how little of the true antiquarian form is found in this publication, by the purchasers' not having been gratified with a *fac-simile* of the paper-mark on each of these MSS. However what has been stated, will answer our purpose just as well.

THERE are two or three obvious ways of procuring old paper, proper for the execution of such a scheme as the present. In publick offices it is a rule to write every memorial, account, or whatever else is to be written, however short, on a whole sheet of paper. In consequence of this practice, in the State-Paper Office, and in many other publick offices where ancient documents are preserved, many superfluous half sheets are from time to time thrown away, when the papers that have become old are arranged and bound up in volumes ; the second leaf of the sheet being often mere lumber. I do not, however, believe
that

that the unknown country gentleman to whom we are indebted for these fabrications, could very easily gain access to our publick offices. The old Houshold-Books and Diaries of ancient families, many of which are but half filled, would also furnish an abundant supply of the same material. But this also was out of his reach. The true and natural paper-warehouse for such a schemer to repair to is, the shop of a bookseller, where every folio and quarto of the age of Elizabeth and James would supply a couple of *single* leaves of white-brown paper, of the hue required.—When these wonders were first announced, I immediately asked some of the *true believers*, whether they had ever seen this tragedy of LEAR, in its *integrity*, as Dr. Warburton would call it,—whole and entire; how was it sewed, what number of leaves did it contain; were the edges in their natural rough state, &c. &c. Not one, I found, had ever seen, I will not say the play, but even a single *sheet* of it. It was produced from time to time (probably as fast as the country gentleman could write it,) in single leaves, that is, in other words, it was written on such paper as the old volumes

volumes that had been collected for this purpose would furnish : and because such a kind of paper is but of a bad texture, and would not well bear writing on both sides, these half sheets, cut down to the size of our old plays printed in small quarto, were presented to the admiring crowd written *on one side only*.—When I first received this account, I immediately took down from their shelf half a dozen old plays of Shakspeare's time, of which I am possessed, and shewed them to any friend who happened to talk with me upon this subject. They are precisely in the same state as when they first came into my hands, and are neither trimmed nor ornamented in any way, but stitched in covers and well embrowned with dust and age ; but unluckily for these *half-covered half* or *quarter sheets* of KYNGE LEARE, my plays are all written on both sides : nor did I ever see a manuscript play of that age that did not in this respect correspond precisely with those now in my Library. Your Lordship, I remember, purchased a few years ago a curious volume containing no less than fifteen manuscript plays, (most of them nearly of the time of Shakspeare,) among which is

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THE ELDER BROTHER of Fletcher; I believe you will find every one of them written on both sides.—What would an author naturally do when he sat down to write a play, at least such an author as Shakspeare, who at the time *LEAR* was produced was in the zenith of his reputation, and in affluent circumstances. Would he not purchase a paper-book, or at least a quire of paper, which would be sufficient for the longest piece he ever wrote, and could then be procured for five pence? But what would he do who sat down to write a play for him near two centuries after his death? He would pick up as well as he could such scraps of old paper as he could find, at various times, and in various places; he would, as in the present case, not be able to shew any of his pretended originals except in the form of half or quarter sheets, and these single leaves having been collected from various quarters would exhibit more than twenty different paper-marks.¹⁹¹

H A V I N G

¹⁹¹ I have been lately informed, that a very honest and intelligent bookbinder at Cambridge has for some years past preserved, as a literary curiosity, all such fly-leaves (as I think they are called,) as the old books put into his hands

HAVING now done with KYNGE LEARE, I may perhaps be expected to say a word on the far-famed tragedy of KYNGE VORRTYGERNE, and all the KKYNGES and all the QQUEENES which have been announced from the same quarter. But any disquisition on this subject is, I conceive, wholly unnecessary ; the outworks being all demolished, the fort must surrender of course. If the tragedy of KYNGE LEARE and all the other Manuscripts which have been produced, in some of which this matchless play is mentioned, have been proved not to be genuine, VORRTYGERNE, which affects, like all the rest, to be of, and in the hand of Shakspeare, and is issued from the same repository, cannot but be a forgery also. If it had exhibited any other hand-writing but the *pretended* hand-writing of Shakspeare, it might have been supposed a genuine old play, though it could not boast of so high a parentage as his dramas ; but the writer of it having “ assumed the person of the noble father” of the stage,

to be re-bound have supplied ; a circumstance which would have saved our unknown gentleman a great deal of trouble, if he had been apprized of it in due time.

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it can be no other than a modern fiction ; and whether it is a good or a bad fiction, I shall leave to others to determine.

THE topicks which have been the subject of the foregoing pages have been suggested by the various pieces lately presented to the publick in a folio volume ; but there are some particulars relative to this matter, not noticed in any part of that publication, which are well worthy of your Lordship's attention.

SEVERAL months ago we were informed by the believers in these fictions, that the *unknown gentleman* to whom we are indebted for all these fooleries, was possessed of a whole-length portrait of Shakspeare, painted in oil colours ; that he there appeared a most goodly personage, of no ordinary stature ; that he had been long concealed from the vulgar ken by having been consigned to a garret, and from his owner's eye by his whole person being entirely covered over with the leaves of old black-letter books, (carefully pasted on,) of

some of which the titles were specified : that Mr. *Ignoto* never thought of washing the poet's face till he was prompted to it by the discovery of the other treasures which he has so liberally poured forth ; but that this invaluable portrait being at length perfectly cleaned and varnished, it would by the very first opportunity be conveyed to the Metropolis. Week after week, however, has passed away, and month succeeded to month, without the amateur's being gratified with this most curious sight. In the same repository also, we were told (about the same time) two copies of the first folio edition of his plays had been found, with the edges of the leaves uncut, which had been the actual copies that had belonged to Messrs. Heminges and Condell, (the gift no doubt of Mr. Isaack Jaggard, and the other publishers of the work,) and added such authenticity to all the rest of the discoveries, as must flash conviction into the most incredulous, and strike all opponents dumb. Happily however for them, neither picture nor books have appeared, and those who shook their heads on that occasion are yet possessed of the gift of speech.—We must
however

however acknowledge that whenever these folios and this portrait (the latter of which I do not yet despair of seeing) shall be *brought forward*, they will add considerable support and credit to the manuscripts in question; for “who can receive it other” than that all these treasures originally belonged to the same person, and that this person must necessarily be either a descendant of Shakspeare, or some person intimately connected with him? Till however that day shall arrive, we may safely regulate our judgments by the old law maxim—*de non apparentibus et de non existentibus eadem est ratio*.

THERE is yet another very curious circumstance of which we have no notice in the editor’s preface; an omission which I shall here endeavour to supply. While these rarities were on shew, among other extraordinary specimens of ancient lore was exhibited to several persons, as I have heard from themselves, a Letter from Shakspeare to his dear friend Richard Cowley, in which he gives an account of having passed the preceding evening with Ben Jonson at a tavern (no doubt his old haunt, THE DEVIL);

DEVIL); our poet adds, that Ben was very surly and dogged, and at length behaved with great rudeness to him, which, however, he says, he was inclined to overlook, as he attributed the ill-behaviour of his old antagonist to his understanding being *deranged* by liquor.¹⁹² By some odd accident this very curious Letter has not been given to the world in the late Miscellany; by which our author has been defrauded of that fair fame to which he is entitled, since in addition to all his other extraordinary endowments this paper ascertains that he had the gift of prophecy; foreseeing not only that after his death the French would introduce the word *deranger* and *derangement* into their language, but that we should within these very few years adopt those words from that nation.¹⁹³—

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¹⁹² Or “to the *derangement* of his understanding by liquor;”—I am not sure which of these expressions was used.

¹⁹³ In our poet's time the French had not the words—*arranger*, *deranger*, nor *derangement*. In Cotgrave's Dict. in 1611, and its republication by Howel in 1650, we find only *ranger*—“to range, rank, order, arraic,” &c. *Deranger* and *derangement* were introduced long afterwards.

The words—*deranged* and *derangement* have been introduced so recently in England, that there are those living who
remember

The omission however of this Letter is the less to be regretted, as it is probably only withheld for a short time, and will hereafter appear with the various complimentary Sonnets which Shakspeare wrote to the Earl of Cumberland, Lord Essex, and many other noblemen, (in *imitation* of Spencer,) in the two folio volumes of his posthumous works with which the publick are at a future day to be gratified.¹⁹⁴

ON reviewing what I have written, I find that I have yet a few observations to make on these papers, and that the very few arguments which have been or may be produced in favour of them yet remain to be answered.

IT has already been mentioned that Sir William D'Avenant was possessed of a
remember their being at first spoken with a French accent, as not being yet made denizens. Dr. Johnson has given neither of them a place in his Dictionary.

¹⁹⁴ The Letter in which Shakspeare speaks very highly of his play of *VORRTYGERNE*, and insists on a larger price for the *copy-right* of it than his bookseller was willing to give, will, it is hoped, appear at the same time, as it places our author in an entirely new light.

gracious

gracious Letter written by King James to our poet with his own hand. Here therefore our fabricator had a fair ground to work upon ; and why it may be asked, did he not adhere to this received tradition, and produce this Letter of James, which is known to have once existed, rather than invent a fiction for which the world was not so well prepared.—In speculating concerning the motives of actions, we are always liable to error ; but it is not very difficult in the present case to assign plausible reasons for the course that has been taken. The fabricator of the Letter of Elizabeth might not have been sufficiently acquainted with the Scottish idiom, to have ventured on devising an Epistle for our British Solomon. This difficulty, however, might perhaps in due time have been got over. But there was another that never could be surmounted : he could not be sure that the Letter of James was not still extant in some unexamined repository ; and whenever it should be produced, detection would necessarily follow. He abstained therefore from this fabrication, for the very same reason which induced him to describe Lord South-

Southampton's bounty to our poet in general terms, instead of naming a specifick sum.¹⁹⁵

As I have once more had occasion to mention this Letter of King James, it naturally leads me to another inquiry. We will allow for a moment that the Epistle of our maiden Queen which has been so minutely examined, and the paper which accompanies it, are genuine. As our author was so extremely anxious that this mark of his gracious Mistresses favour to him should be preserved "withe alle care possyble" in his family, why was he not equally solicitous about the Letter of James? and why were not these two royal epistles "feat and affectedly enswathed with sleided silk," and placed together in the "lyttelle cedarr trunk," or in any casket proper for their reception? It does not fall to the lot of many men to receive letters from two crowned heads: and when it does, if either from the love of fame, or any other motive, the person thus honoured should have any solicitude about the transmission of such memorials to posterity, he would naturally place them *together*, and preserve them in the same

¹⁹⁵ See p. 169.

cabinet. — We do not however find that Shakspeare did so in the present instance : but in due time, I make no doubt that what I have now suggested as probable, will be found to be the truth, and after a proper search the Letter of King James will be discovered in the same repository which contained that of Elizabeth.¹⁹⁶

THE various specimens of old language which have been given in the preceding pages, prove incontrovertibly that the orthography used in these spurious manuscripts is the orthography of no time whatsoever : but say the partisans of these fictions, though we cannot produce any examples of the *ande* and *forre* used here, and of such an extraordinary redundancy of consonants and vowels, it does not therefore follow that these papers are modern fabrications ; for that being an age of no curiosity or consistency in this respect, particular persons might have fallen

¹⁹⁶ It is not improbable also, that in some time after the *fac-similes* of the genuine hand-writing of Queen Elizabeth and Lord Southampton exhibited in this volume, shall have reached the *unknown gentleman*, he may discover a new correspondence between those personages and our poet, “ of a better leer” than what we have now reviewed : but I here before-hand enter my protest against this device.

into *unexampled* modes of capricious and irregular orthography. Be it so then: in the books and manuscripts of the time we certainly find great irregularity of orthography; the courtier spells in one way, the lawyer in another, the gentlewoman in a third, the artisan in a fourth. But unfortunately *here*, the Queen, the Nobleman, the Actor, the Scrivener, all spell exactly like each other, and like no other Queens, Noblemen, Actors, or Scriveners, that lived before or since their time. Can we have a stronger proof than this, that this miscellaneous collection was the composition of one and the same hand, or rather (on account of the *deeds*) of two hands acting in concert with each other?

BUT the following defence of the authenticity of these pieces is of a finer texture. It is easier, it is said, to give credit to all these papers with all their absurdities and incongruities of spelling and language, the total dissimilitude of the hand-writing to that of the persons in whose names they appear, and all the other denotations of fraud belonging to them, than to suppose that any person should devote a large portion of his life to

such a scheme ; that he should be such a fool as to make use of orthography unknown in any age, run his head against known facts, and not endeavour to produce some kind of resemblance to the hand-writing of the persons whose genuine papers were pretended to be shewn. This incongruity, and wild deviation from ordinary practice, is what no fabricator of such manuscripts would have ever thought of, or hazarded ; and therefore this circumstance, instead of weakening their credit, gives them the strongest support, and proves their authenticity with irresistible force.

THIS reasoning is evidently formed on the well-known thesis of your Lordship's old acquaintance, Hume, respecting miracles,—that if it be more miraculous that a certain fact should have happened than that the relater of it should deceive or be deceived, it is incumbent on the serious inquirer, after weighing probabilities, to decide according to the superiority discovered, and to reject what he calls THE GREATER MIRACLE. In like manner, in the present case we are told, it is easier to believe all these papers to be genuine, than that such an extraordinary

dinary combination of folly and imposture should exist, as must have produced them on the supposition of their being spurious : this is the greater miracle of the two, and therefore we must acquiesce in their authenticity, be the objections to them what they may :—the arguments of their opponents only serve to support and authenticate them ; for the most ordinary forger might have imitated the hand-writing of Elizabeth and the rest with sufficient accuracy ; and when Holinshed and Shakspeare's own works lay before him, he never would have thought of departing so widely from verisimilitude by adopting an orthography and language unknown alike to them and the age in which they lived.

ONE knows not well how to answer this *crotchet*, for I will not call it argument. According to this doctrine, if the theatrical accompts, and the correspondence of our poet with his mistress and Lord Southampton, had been produced in Latin or Greek, they would be still less disputable, or rather indubitably authentick ; for what forger would have ever devised any thing so improbable ?

probable?—In deeds the usual and orderly parts are, the *premises*, which contain the number and names of the parties; the *habendum* and *tenendum*, which determine what estate or interest is granted, and the tenure by which it is to be held; the *reddendum*, or rent or services reserved; the clause of warranty, the covenants, and the conclusion, which last mentions the execution and date of the deed. Supposing therefore this mode of reasoning to be just, if a deed should be constructed for the meridian of that country where Raleigh, and after him Shakspeare, tell us the heads of the inhabitants grow beneath their shoulders, and the *habendum*, instead of being in the middle, should be placed in the beginning of the instrument; or if, in honour of Abbé Sieyès, and to gratify the Convention of Palace-yard, the bottom should be placed at the top, and the names of the parties and their hands and seals should change places; “by this kind of chase,” I say, if such a deed should be produced as executed by Shakspeare, these or any other similar fantastick absurdities ought to be considered as the strongest marks of its authenticity; for if we will but assume that no fabricator
of

of a forged instrument would ever venture to depart from verisimilitude, the more incongruous, untechnical, and absurd any deed or paper is, the more likely it is to be genuine. But did the partisans of these fabrications never hear of cunning overreaching itself? Might not all these incongruities and absurdities have been adopted for the purpose of laying a foundation for this very argument? or lastly, might not many of them have been the genuine offspring of “dull, unfeeling, barren ignorance,” eager to effect a lucrative and difficult imposture, but totally unfurnished with the means of accomplishing it?

REASONING such as this may be, and sometimes is, used at the bar, because a barrister must employ such topicks as his cause will admit. An eminent lawyer in Ireland, now dead, your Lordship remembers used a similar argument in a great cause decided some years ago in your House, and endeavoured to shew that a certificate of marriage, which was the *cardo causæ*, was the more authentick for its not having a very fair appearance, “the blots and alterations of letters in it being all owing
(as

(as he contended) to its being written with a split pen, the nib of which divided in making the strokes. Had it been forged, it would have been fabricated in such a manner as not to be liable to any suspicion or objection. All its little inaccuracies only tended to shew that it was not a writing framed to impose upon the world : and if these were purposely introduced, it was a deeper policy than that of the elder Brutus, who was said to have carried on treasonable designs under the countenance of an idiot.”

To this argument the praise of ingenuity may be allowed ; but (without in the least impeaching the cause of the gentleman who produced it,) it will not bear any very critical investigation. Though the common practice, in cases of fabrication, is to follow the beaten path, and to aim at an identity of language, hand-writing, &c. yet this is not always the case ; either because ignorance sometimes may not know how to effect its purpose, or a subtle practiser, like great wits, may sometimes intentionally

“ From vulgar bounds *with brave disorder* part,”
to give a grace and gloss to his scheme, beyond

yond the conception or reach of ordinary artists.—But in spite of all the gloss, and graces, and refinements, of art, truth and falshood can never be so confounded as not to be distinguishable from each other : and though the exact similitude of hand-writing is no certain proof of the authenticity of any paper, because the art of forgery is so well understood and practised, that even the Clerks of the Bank of England cannot sometimes distinguish their own hand-writing from its counterfeit, yet to the plain and common sense of mankind a great *dissimilitude* of hand-writing, and the use of words or stamps that were not known till many years after the date of the writings or deeds exhibited, are as strong proofs of forgery as can be produced.

I MAY add that “ the whymsycalle conceyte ” by which these manuscripts are attempted to be supported, stands on a false hypothesis ; namely, that it would have taken a large portion of life to have fabricated such various and numerous pieces, and that it is incredible so much folly and imposture as is acknowledged in the present case, should

be found united in the same person or persons. In answer to the last observation, it is only necessary to ask, who can ascertain the boundaries of ignorance and imposture? With respect to the quantity of these fabrications, which has been much relied on, and has struck a few persons as a proof of authenticity, it may be proper to be more particular.—In this, as in many other cases, admiration arises only from not having sufficiently examined the subject. The whole of what has been produced is, twelve short papers, four deeds, and two plays, consisting, we will say, of three thousand lines each; all of which, instead of employing a large portion of life, might have been produced in one year. We are not tied down to suppose that only one person was concerned. It is much more probable that the composition of all but the deeds was the work of one, and that the Shakspearean rags (for I will not call it *cloathing*) were sewn on by another. He, or she, (for we know not even the sex of the author) who might be able to “spin a thousand lines a day,” might know nothing of old hands; and the adept in the art of counterfeiting old hands might not have the faculty of writing a line of poetry.

poetry. The invention of the smaller pieces and of the play, it is surely not unreasonable to suppose, might have been effected in six months ; and in six more not only these, but the tragedy of LEAR, might have been copied in the hand required.—It should be recollected that no hand-writing but that of Shakspeare has been exhibited, excepting the miserable attempts at that of Elizabeth, Lord Southampton, Heminges, Condell, and Lowin ; all of which could not have taken a month. Of Shakspeare's hand-writing we have but eleven letters of the ordinary alphabet, and three capital letters, extant. Here therefore the artist had an open field. There was no large quantity of writing of the poet known to be any where existing, to which an appeal could be made, and which, from a peculiarity in the manner of his forming certain letters,¹⁹⁷ might lead to detection. He had nothing therefore to do but to attain what he thought¹⁹⁸ a general resemblance, and when
 once

¹⁹⁷ Thus, for example, Lord Southampton appears to have formed the letter *f* in a manner peculiar to himself.

¹⁹⁸ I say, what *he* thought ; for he will not find many who will allow that it has even a general resemblance. It is remarkable that he had not sagacity enough to reflect

once that was attained, I have no doubt that he transcribed the printed pages of *LEAR*, or the written pages of *VORRTYGERNE*, nearly as fast as he could have transcribed them in his ordinary hand. The present fabrication therefore differs from all others in this respect, that the artificer thought he might take a greater licence, and consequently was enabled to proceed with much more facility and despatch than in ordinary cases.

How much may be done by assiduous application, where a particular object is in view, I can from my own experience furnish a strong instance. I transcribed the poem of *ROMEUS AND JULIET*, which I afterwards published, and which consists of above three thousand long lines of fourteen syllables each, in seven days : but to effect it, I was obliged to work from morning till night. A similar application in the present instance would have effected this audacious

that the hand-writing of the youth of eighteen generally differs much from that of the man at fifty. Hence, we find our poet's name subscribed to the pretended Letter to his mistress, which must be referred to 1582, evidently formed on the signature to his Will in 1616, and undistinguishable from the other pretended signatures to the deeds, &c.

fabrication

fabrication in a much shorter time than I have allowed. But supposing all my calculations to be erroneous, why may not this forgery have been the work of three or four years?—In that time even its most zealous partisans must acknowledge it might have been all completed.¹⁹⁹

THE usual spelling of the time might have been easily copied, but it was departed from for the reason already assigned,—to give a greater air of originality to the fabrication; and the mass of papers and deeds was hazarded, to subdue all suspicion by its magnitude. As for the correct imitation of hands, which it is contended might have been accomplished, that certainly was not so easy; because in several instances the fabricator had no archetype whatsoever. Queen Elizabeth's ordinary hand-writing he had no means of getting at. He might indeed have found it in the Museum; but *tracing* it there, as it is called, with the

¹⁹⁹ I think it extremely probable that the scheme was laid, and that books, &c. were collected five or six years ago, and the executive part effected in the year, or at most in the two years, which preceded January 1795.

proper

proper apparatus, might afterwards have induced suspicion, and endangered the whole scheme. Lord Southampton's hand-writing he certainly had no means of imitating at all; for that there was a Letter written by him among the Harleian Manuscripts, was, I have reason to believe, known to few beside myself, there being no reference to it in the Index to the Harleian Catalogue, and it being unknown even to the judicious and well-informed Librarians of that noble collection. The other Letter of the same nobleman in the Cotton Library was discovered only a few months ago, in consequence of a particular examination being ordered to be made of the three volumes of Royal and State Letters there repositied, which are only generally mentioned in the old catalogue. The hand-writing of Heminges, Lowin, and Condell, were all equally unknown, and, like Southampton's, were all supposed to be out of the reach of the most curious inquirer. As to language and phraseology, what was conceived to be the phraseology of that time *was* imitated, according to the slender abilities of the fabricator of this fiction;—how well we have seen:

seen : very different abilities, and taste, and knowledge, would have been requisite to have produced any fiction that should not be assailable on that ground ; and I doubt much whether those who have travelled longest in the paths of antiquity would not be liable to stumble in such an attempt. Dr. Johnson, if I remember right, has somewhere observed, that the imitators of Spencer think they have performed their task, when they have adopted his stanza, and disfigured their verses by a due sprinkling of old spelling and old language ; but they forget that if any word is introduced unknown to Spencer's age, the poem can be no just imitation of that author.

IN addition to the mass of papers produced, we are assailed by the whole Library of Shakspeare, consisting, according to some accounts, of eleven hundred volumes ; of which a very fair CATALOGUE is produced, and *some* of the pretended volumes have been displayed. How this circumstance can have made any impression on any one, (as I am told it has on two or three persons,) appears to me very extraordinary. Was it then a matter of such
mighty

mighty achievement, (for the purpose of forming this Catalogue,) to transcribe Mr. Capell's List of the volumes of that age, which he collected for the purpose of illustrating Shakspeare's works, and to add to it from any old Catalogues whatever might be wanting?²⁰⁰—"But some of the books themselves have been produced."—I make no doubt of it. But are old books so very difficult to be procured? And could not two or three hundred have been picked up on stalls, and elsewhere, in five or six years, during which this scheme may have been in contemplation? Within these few years past the price of Holinshed's Chronicle has doubled, in consequence of his having been pointed out as the author whom Shakspeare followed in his Historical Plays, and of our poet's daily-increasing reputation: yet still it is without much difficulty to be procured; and I have seen no less than four copies of it on sale within the last year. The same observation may be made on many other valuable books of that age, for which a high

²⁰⁰ By turning over the pages of the late editions of Shakspeare, I make no doubt, the names of a thousand books or tracts of his age, might be collected in a few days: and *names* alone are wanting to make a *catalogue*.

price might very well occasionally have been given, where a great object was in view. But valuable or costly books were not always necessary; worthless books, when duly appropriated by writing our poet's name forty or fifty times in them, would do just as well.²⁰¹—With respect to smaller tracts, a different process was to be pursued, for they could not be safely exhibited as Shakspeare's, while they remained in miscellaneous volumes. It is well known to the collectors of these rarities, that very often pieces extremely discordant, both in their subjects and dates, are strangely blended together under the same covering. Thus “The Golden Legend,” printed by Wynken de Worde, or “the Gorgeous Gal-

²⁰¹ In the margins of several of these books, I have been told, are displayed remarks by Shakspeare, each of which is subscribed with his name; and very properly,—for how else should the inspector have known that these books came out of his Library?

This trick of our author is quite peculiar to himself. Few scribblers in books think of appropriating their marginal remarks by this kind of subscription to each of them; but his *known vanity*, and attention to his *literary property* and fame, were without doubt the cause of this practice.

lery of Gallant Inventions, ²⁰² or Greene's " Art of Connycatching," ²⁰³ or " A Fig for Momus," ²⁰⁴ or " The Nest of Ninnies," ²⁰⁵ or " The Art of Swimming," ²⁰⁶ (not by the renowned William Henry Ireland of Blackfriars, but by Christopher Middleton,) or " The Essayes of an Apprentice in Poetry," ²⁰⁷ or " The Arte of Legerdemaine," ²⁰⁸ or " the Arbour of Amorous Devices," ²⁰⁹ or some other of those delectable treatises which the late editors of Shakspeare's works have thought it necessary to read for the illustration of their author, may happen to be bound up in the same volume with " A Plot for the good of Posterity," ²¹⁰ or " Tom of all Trades," ²¹¹ or " A Pacquet of Wonders brought over in Charon's ferry-boat," ²¹² or " Fair Warnings to a Careless World," ²¹³ or " The Counter-Scuffle," ²¹⁴ or " The Unloveliness of love-locks," ²¹⁵ or " Papers Complaint against the paper-spoylers of these times," ²¹⁶ which belong to a period

²⁰² 4to. 1578. ²⁰³ 4to. 1592. ²⁰⁴ 4to. 1595. ²⁰⁵ 4to. 1609. ²⁰⁶ 4to. 1595. ²⁰⁷ By King James. Edinb. 4to. 1584. ²⁰⁸ By Samuel Rowland, 4to. 1612. ²⁰⁹ 4to. 1580. ²¹⁰ By Francis Cheynell, 4to. 1646. ²¹¹ 4to. 1631. ²¹² 4to. 1641. ²¹³ 4to. 1662. ²¹⁴ 4to. 1628. ²¹⁵ 4to. 1648. ²¹⁶ By A. H. 4to. 1624.

subsequent to Shakspeare's death. No such volume therefore could be safely exhibited as his. What then is to be done? The process is extremely simple. The *unknown* gentleman from whose store-house all these rarities have issued, has nothing to do but to cut out such tracts as are dated prior to 1616; and after each of them has been separately cloathed with morocco or vellum, or any other covering that fancy may direct, and the name of William Shakspeare has been written in the upper, lower, and side margin of twenty or thirty pages, it becomes a most valuable relick, miraculously preserved for near two hundred years, and now first displayed to the gazing world, an undoubted and invaluable original. The prying Antiquary without doubt may occasion a little embarrassment by regretting the loss of the original cover, which, beside its comely ancient simplicity, he may suppose a mark of authenticity; but he is only one of many, and on all others it will pass very well.—In two months two hundred such volumes might be procured. Let us then hear no more of Shakspeare's Library.

BUT still, it is said, the deeds at least must be ancient ; for the parchment, writing, and seals, have all the appearance of antiquity. Is then “ the state of these *good believers* so gracious” that they have never heard that the whole writing of ancient deeds may be discharged by the essential salt of lemons, or marine or nitrous acid ? The contents of these deeds being proved to be forged, it necessarily follows, if the parchments be really old, that the original writing has been discharged by one or other of these processes, and new writing substituted in its place. But the parchments themselves may be as modern as the writing ; for the process by which parchment acquires the air of antiquity is not very tedious or difficult.²¹⁷ Supposing the parchment

²¹⁷ As probably the greater part of my readers are wholly unacquainted with the art and mystery of *making old deeds*, the following extract from a cause of much celebrity in the last century, which contains some curious information on this subject, may not be unacceptable to them. I mean the case of *Mossam, v. Dame Theodosia Ivy*, reported in the *STATE TRIALS*, vol. vii. p. 571. The property in contest was a large district in the parish of Shadwell, (about seven acres,) on which between three and four hundred houses had been built, and the question was, whether these

ment to be old, which however I do not believe to have been the case, some of the seals

these seven acres were part of the inheritance of the Dean of St. Paul's, to whom a Mr. Neale was lessee, and then lessor of the plaintiff, or part of Wapping Marsh, that had been drained by one Vanderdelf, and afterwards was sold to a person of the name of Stepkins, under whom Lady Ivy claimed. The deeds on which her title principally depended, were two leases, one alleged to have been made on the 13th of November, and the other on the 22d of December in the second and third years of Philip and Mary, [Nov. and Dec. 1555,] who were styled in these deeds King and Queen of England, *Spain*, France, the two Sicilies, &c. Dukes of *Burgundy*, *Millain*, and Brabant, &c.—The King and Queen not having assumed the title of King and Queen of Spain till some months afterwards, (before which time they were styled *Princes* of Spain,) and *Millain* being always in their true style put *before* Burgundy, these deeds were thus ascertained to be forged.—In the course of this trial several facts were ascertained, that may throw some light on the question before us.

* * * *

“ *Sir John Trevor*. My Lord, we would gladly know where they had this Lease, that so it may appear whence it came ; for we know they have an excellent art at finding out of deeds.

Mr. Att. Gen. Mr. Knowles, do you know any thing of that deed? When did you first see it?

Mr. Williams. And where had you it?

Knowles. My lord, I had it in a garret, in a kind of a nook, about six feet long, and three feet and an half wide, in my own house, in the garret, among other writings.

[Mr.

seals have been newly *tempered*, like Shallow, *between the finger and the thumb*; for
great

[Mr. Sutton sworn and examined.]

Mr. Sol. Gen. [After a few questions had been asked,] Pray, my lord, give me leave to ask him [Knowles] a question, which I hope may clear all this matter, for it is plain the man is mistaken.

Lord Ch. J. Mistaken! Yes, I assure you very grossly. Ask him what questions you will, but if he should swear as long as Sir John Falstaff fought, I would never believe a word he says.

[Knowles was then examined again.]

* * * *

Mr. Att. Gen. [After a long examination.] We must lay aside the testimony of this man.

Lord Ch. J. Ay, so you had need.

Mr. Att. Gen. We shall desire your lordship to consider all the use we make of this deed is, to prove that the mill was removed to another place.

Lord Ch. J. I do not know what it proves; but if you had kept your witness, Knowles, in the mill, I think you had done better than brought him hither.

* * * *

Mr. Att. Gen. They go about to blemish our deeds by the folly of our witnesses, which we cannot help. We however leave the deeds to the Jury, and let them see if those seals and other things look like counterfeits.

* * * *

Mr. Bradbury. My lord, we have had a violent suspicion that these deeds were forged; but we suspect now no longer, for we have detected it; and will shew as palpable self-evident forgery on the face of these deeds as ever was.

[Part of the deeds of the 13th of Nov. and 22d of Dec.
2 and

great indeed must be his credulity who believes Shakspeare's pretended seal with the

2 and 3 of Philip and Mary, was then read ; as were the titles of the acts of the parliament which began Oct. 22, and ended 9th of Dec. 2 and 3 of Philip and Mary, and several of the fines levied in the following Hilary and Easter Term, in which the true style of the King and Queen was found. In Trinity term the style was changed.

Mr. Bradbury. I cannot see how these deeds can be truly made at that time, when they stand single, and *none like them can be shewn, except they come from the same forge that these do.* I cannot believe that the Miller alone, or he that drew his leases for him, *could so long before prophecy what manner of style should hereafter be used.*

* * * *

Mr. Williams. Pray, swear that lady.—[*Mrs. Duffet sworn.*] *Mrs. Duffet,*—Will you acquaint my Lord and the Jury what you know has been done by my Lady Ivy, or by her direction, in making and altering of deeds ?

Mrs. Duffet. My lord, I did see Mr. Duffet forge and counterfeit several deeds for my Lady Ivy.

Lord Ch. J. Was my Lady Ivy by, when the writing was made ?

Mrs. Duffet. She was by, giving him order how to make it, and what ink he should use, to make it look old ; and they forced me to make the ink, and *to fetch saffron to put in it, to make it look old.*

Mr. Serj. Stringer. Pray, what did they do to the deeds they made, to make them look like ancient true deeds ?

Mrs. Duffet. For the making of the outsides look old and dirty, they used to rub them on windows that were very dusty, and wear them in their pockets to crease them, for some weeks together, according as they intended to make

the impression of a boar's head, in honour of Falstaff's tavern, or that of Lowin, shadowed out after the head of one of our Saxon Monarchs, or some similar original, to be genuine. The former of these seals furnishes one of those instances to which I have already alluded, where cunning overreaches itself; for this doubtless was

make use of them.—When they had been rubbed upon the window to make them look dirty, and they were to pass for deeds of a great many years standing, it was used to lay them in a balcony, or any open place, for the rain to come upon them and wet them, and then the next sun-shiny day they were exposed to the sun, or a fire made, to dry them hastily, that they might be shrivelled.

Mr. Dolbens. What do you know of counterfeiting any seals?

Mrs. Duffet. Mr. Duffet once had the impression of a seal in his hand, with which he said he was going to one Mr. Dryden to have it counterfeited: but I do not remember what the seal was.

Mr. Williams. When the deeds were written, how did he use to put the names to them?

Mrs. Duffet. I have seen my Lady herself write some great letters of the names first upon paper, which Mr. Duffet could not so well hit; and he has writ the rest.”—

Verdict for the plaintiff; and a motion was made by his counsel that the several deeds produced by the defendant, that were detected of forgery, might be left in court, that an Information might be brought against Lady Ivy for forging and publishing them; which information was accordingly fyled in Trinity Term, 1684.

thought

thought a most happy device, while in fact it is a manifest denotation of fraud.

LET me ask, before I conclude, what would have been the process, if any person had really discovered a coffer, or old cabinet, filled with original manuscripts of Shakspeare? Would he not immediately have perused them *all* most eagerly, and after having made an exact list of the whole, would he not then proclaim his good fortune to the world, and invite all his friends to see and examine them, to whom he would naturally relate in what manner he had made the discovery, how long they had been in his possession, and from whom they were derived? And could not all this, excepting the invitation to friends, have been done in a week, as well as in three or four months? I am myself at this moment surrounded with not less than a hundred deeds, letters, and miscellaneous papers, directly or indirectly relating to Shakspeare; and though they are not in the most exact order, in consequence of my having frequent occasion to consult them, I would undertake to arrange and make a list of them all in two days, without omitting a

Y Y

single

single article.—In the present case, on the other hand, that there might be no one circumstance or ground of suspicion wanting, we find that no such complete list was made by the unknown gentleman, or ever produced: he fed the publick precisely in proportion to their credulity, issuing out his papers and deeds by *driblets* in the course of four or five months, during which it is manifest that some of those produced in the latter part of that period were devised and fabricated, in order to cover and give a kind of sanction to those which had been previously transmitted from that dark and unknown repository where they were originally framed.

THERE is yet another difficulty, which not only never has been, but never can be got over. Allowing for a moment that not one of the decisive proofs of forgery which have been produced, are valid, from what quarter could such a mass of heterogeneous papers and deeds be derived? Lady Barnard, Shakspeare's granddaughter, or her executor, might have her grandmother's love-letters, the rings and lock of hair of her grandfather, and the coun-

counterparts of any leases he had made; but how should she have a deed of trust made by her ancestor to John Heminges, and *suppressed by him*, or a deed made by Shakspeare to his beloved friend Mr. William Henry Ireland, &c.? On the other hand, among the papers of Mr. Heminges might have been found this suppressed deed and stage-contracts, and leases made jointly by him and Shakspeare; but how should he or his representatives become possessed of letters written by the poet to his mistress, the lock of hair which he presented to her, the valuable ring given to him by Lord Southampton, or the gracious epistle with which Queen Elizabeth honoured him? Whatever quarter is fixed upon, will be found equally objectionable; and accordingly, after frequently shifting the ground, this point has been given up in despair, and we are not furnished with even a plausible conjecture upon the subject.

IMPOSTURES of this kind are no novelties in the History of Letters. Muretus, about the time Shakspeare was born, deceived Joseph Scaliger by some verses

of an ancient dramatick poet named Trabeas, which, he said, he had recently discovered.²¹⁸ In 1693, Francis Nodot, a Frenchman, published at Paris what he called a complete copy of Petronius, from a MS. which he pretended to have found at Belgrade five years before: but it is now well known to have been a forgery.²¹⁹ The fable of Psalmanazar will be long remembered for the great ingenuity and deep contrition of that learned impostor.²²⁰

At

²¹⁸ Scaliger revenged himself by the well known epigram:

Qui rigidæ flammæ vitaverat ante Tholosæ,
Muretus, fumos vendidit ille mihi.

²¹⁹ The following Hendecasyllables, which were written on that occasion, are sufficiently applicable to the author of the present clumsy imposture:

Salve, nec latio libelle naso,
Nec lingua facili, nec elegante,
Nec sane nimis Attici saporis,
Proles patris imaginosa Galli.
Tu te ludere credis et joculari
Romano sale, Gratiis Latinis?
Tun' fucum facere auribus Batavis?
O inscitia ruris inficeti,
O vecordia putidi cerebri.

²²⁰ There are many now living who remember the deep contrition of Psalmanazar, whose real name is yet unknown. In his last Will he thus penitently expresses himself, relative

At Venice in the present century (1738) an entire Manuscript of Catullus was fabricated, which the forger said he had discovered at Rome, and which happily supplied all the defects found either in preceding manuscripts or the printed editions of that author.²²¹—The fabrications
of

tive to this imposture: “But the principal manuscript I thought myself bound to leave behind is a faithful narrative of my education and the sallies of my wretched youthful years, and the various ways by which I was in some measure unavoidably led into the base and shameful imposture of passing upon the world for a native of Formosa, and a convert to Christianity, and backing it with a fictitious account of that island and of my own travels, conversion, &c. all or most of it hatched in my own brain, without regard to truth and honesty.—If the obscurity I have lived in during such a series of years should make it needless to revive a thing in all likelihood so long since forgot, I cannot but wish that so much of it was published in some weekly paper, as might inform the world, especially those who have still by them the fabulous account of the island of Formosa, &c. that I have long since owned both in conversation and in print, that it was no other than a mere forgery of my own devising, a scandalous imposition on the publick, and such as I think myself bound to beg God and the world pardon for writing, and have been long since, as I am to this day and shall be as long as I live, heartily sorry for and ashamed of.”

²²¹ The fabricator of this spurious MS. was G. F. Corradini.—“Corradinum mendacii manifestum tenemus, ipsemet

of Lauder, and of the poems of Ossian and Rowley, are yet fresh in the memory of every one; and some time before either Ossian or Chatterton was heard of, William Rufus Chetwood, an obscure bookseller, distinguished himself by the fruitfulness of his inventions, which, like those now before us, related to Shakspeare: he did not, however, aspire to the dignity of forging manuscripts, contenting himself with inventing the titles of editions of our author's plays, never seen by any one except himself.²²² But none of these impostors

semet namque codicem Romanam sibi confinxit, quin de hac ludificatione ridebat interdum, fabulando." Maffei in Append. ad Museum Veronense, p. ccv.

By following this copy, the elegant edition of Catullus printed by Coustelier at Paris, in 1743, is of no value.

²²² William Rufus Chetwood had been Prompter to Drury-Lane Theatre for twenty years, and was also a Bookseller. Having been obliged to leave London, he removed to Dublin, and died in the Marshalsea there about the year 1760. While he was in confinement, a book entitled THE BRITISH THEATRE was published in Dublin, (12mo. 1750) compiled, as the editor says, from Chetwood's papers, in which, in order to give them an additional value, he inserted the titles of several fictitious editions of Shakspeare's plays which, he said, were printed in small quarto in the author's life-time:

“ An

postors were daring enough to produce any pretended original manuscript, as written
by

“ An excellent conceyted Tragedie of *Romeo and Juliette*, with the *Wranglyngs of the two famous houses of Mountague and Capulette*, 1593.”—“ *The Tempeste*, wythe the Enchantments of the banished Lorde Prospero, 1595.”
“ A most pleasaunte Comedie called *A Midsummer Night's Dreame*, with the *Freakes of the Fayries*, 1595.”—“ The true Chronicle of *Kynge Henrie the 8th*, wythe the costlie coronatione of *Queene Anne Bulleyne*, after his divorce from *Queene Catharine*; the cunninge of *Cardinal Wolsey* wythe his disgrace and deathe; wythe the birthe and *christianing* of our gracious Princess, *Elizabeth*, 1597, 1598, (with alterations) 1605.”—“ A wittie and pleasaunte Comedie called *the Taminge of the Shrewe*, 1598, 1601, 1607, 1608. *There are great alterations in the two last editions.*”—“ *Hamlet, Prince of Denmarke* his Tragedie, wythe his just revenge on the adulterous *Kynge Claudius*, and the poisoning of the *Queen Gertrude*, 1599, 1605, 1609.”—“ *The Twoe Gentlemen of Verona*, a pleasaunte Comedie, 1600, 1613, 1614.”—“ The true Tragedie of *Timon of Athens*, wythe the dogged veine of *Apemantus*, 1604.”—“ The excellent Tragedie of *Cymbeline*, wythe the warres of the *Romans* wythe the *Brittaines*, 1606.”—“ *A Winter Nigte Tale*, an excellent Comedie, 1606.”—“ *Caius Martius Coriolanus*, his lamentable Tragedie, 1606,” &c. &c.

His invention seems to have reached its utmost height in the two following paragraphs, which doubtless he thought master-pieces :

“ *Measure for Measure*. This play is without a date, but by an Advertisement at the end, viz. *Where may be boughte at his shopp printed last year (1600) the Twoe Gentlemen*

by the author himself: all these fictions therefore, however reprehensible, were, for obvious reasons, harmless and innocent compared with the present fabrication, whether it be considered with a view to society, or to the character and history of the incomparable poet whose handwriting has been counterfeited.

BUT to draw to a conclusion.—In the course of this inquiry it has been shewn that the artificer or artificers of this clumsy and daring fraud, whatever other qualifications they may possess, know nothing of the history of Shakspeare, nothing of the

lemen of Verona by W. Shakspeare, GENTLEMAN, we may venture to date this play in 1601."

"*The Whole Contentions betwene the two famous houses of Lancastre and Yorke, &c. in two parts.*—These two plays are printed without a date, but we are assured they must be acted about this time; for at the end of *Romeo and Juliet*, printed for Andrew Wise in 1597, is the following Advertisement. *At the Shopp of Andrew Wise Mr. William Shakspeare his Henrie the 6th, in two parts, may be boughte.*—The 3d part is printed in 1600; but we make no doubt that it was printed before that date, though the edition is not in our possession."

Romeo and Juliet was printed in 1597, not for Andrew Wise, but John Danter, and at the end of the play there is no advertisement whatsoever.

history of the Stage, or the history of the English Language. It has been proved, that there is no external evidence whatsoever that can give any credibility to the manuscripts which have been now examined, or even entitle them to a serious consideration. That the manner in which they have been produced, near two centuries after the death of their pretended author, is fraught with the strongest circumstances of suspicion. That the orthography of all the papers and deeds is not only not the orthography of that time, but the orthography of no period whatsoever. That the language is not the language of that age, but is in various instances the language of a century afterwards. That the dates, where there are dates, either express or implied, and almost all the facts mentioned, are repugnant to truth, and are refuted by indisputable documents. That the theatrical contracts are wholly inconsistent with the usages of the theatres in the age of Shakspeare; and that the law of the legal instruments is as false as the spelling and phraseology are absurd and senseless. And lastly, that the hand-writing of all the miscellaneous papers,

pers, and the signatures of all the deeds, wherever genuine autographs have been obtained, are wholly dissimilar to the handwriting of the persons by whom they are said to have been written and executed ; and where autographs have not been found, to the general mode of writing in that age. If any additional proof of forgery is wanting, I confess I am at a loss to conceive of what nature it should be.

I HAVE now done ; and I trust I have vindicated Shakspeare from all this “ imputed trash,” and rescued him from the hands of a bungling impostor, by proving all these Manuscripts to be the true and genuine offspring of consummate ignorance and unparalleled audacity.²²³

WHILE

²²³ It has often been a subject of regret among the friends of that great and good man, the late Dr. Johnson, that his valuable life was not protracted a few years longer ; that he did not live to see the attempts which have been made in a neighbouring kingdom to obliterate from men’s minds the belief of a future state, and every principle which tends to enforce a conformation of human actions to the Divine laws ; with all the wild and pernicious theories of government which have been propagated by the republican zealots of the present day, both in this country and France,
alike

WHILE I was employed in this investigation, I sometimes fancied that I was
pleading

alike subversive of those establishments which he so justly revered, and of the peace and happiness of mankind. On such a subject how would he have kindled, and with what strength of argument, and energy, and eloquence, would he have treated it!—Though he would not have displayed equal ardour on a subject comparatively of so little importance as the present fabrication, yet even here, he who in opposing the fictions of Ossian and Chatterton was as strenuous as any of their most determined assailants, would not have been an indifferent spectator: and as his sagacity and discernment would have immediately seen through the whole of the fraud, he would not have been slow to express his indignation at it.—Strongly impressed with this notion, while I have been employed in the present work, I have sometimes imagined that I beheld him looking down from the abodes of the blessed, animating me to proceed in the cause of Shakspeare and of truth, and exclaiming in his firm and sonorous tone,

— *cape saxa manu, cape robora, pastor.*

The warm part he took on the detection of Lauder, naturally brought this excellent man to my mind. It is well known that he wrote the greater part of that impostor's penitentiary Letter to Dr. Douglas, (the present Lord Bishop of Salisbury,) which Lauder afterwards was base enough to retract. As I trust, that the now unknown contriver of the present imposture will hereafter be discovered, and hope that he will have a due sense of the heinousness of his offence against society and the cause of letters, the

pleading the cause of our great dramattick poet before the ever-blooming God of melody

following formulary of recantation and contrition, written for Lauder by Dr. Johnson, may very properly (*mutatis mutandis*) be recommended to him :

“ I publickly, and without the least dissimulation, subterfuge, or concealment, acknowledge the truth of the charge which you have advanced. On the sincerity and punctuality of this confession, I am willing to depend for all the future regard of mankind; and cannot but indulge some hopes that they whom my offence hath alienated from me, may by this instance of ingenuity and repentance be propitiated and reconciled.—Whatever may be the event, I shall at least have done all that can be done in reparation of my former injuries to *Shakspeare*, to truth, and to mankind; and entreat that those who shall still continue implacable will examine their own hearts, whether they have not committed equal crimes without equal proofs of sorrow, or equal acts of atonement.—For the violation of truth I offer no excuse, because I well know that nothing can excuse it. Nor will I aggravate my crime by disingenuous palliations. I confess it, I repent it, and resolve that my first offence shall be my last. More I cannot perform, and more therefore cannot be required of me.”—MILTON *no Plagiary, or a Detection of the Forgeries contained in Lauder's Essay on the imitation of the Moderns in the PARADISE LOST, &c.* By the Rev. John Douglas, A. M. 2d edit. 1756, p. 84.

Lauder published his recantation in 1751, in a Letter to the Rev. Mr. Douglas, drawn up for him by Dr. Johnson,

lody and song. Possessed with this idea, and having after a very restless night closed my eyes at an early hour of the morning, I imagined myself transported to Parnassus, where Apollo and his nine female assessors were trying this question, and were pleased to call on me to deliver my sentiments, as Counsel for Shakspeare, before they should proceed further in the cause. The various poets of all times and countries were amusing themselves with their lyres on this celebrated hill, which was richly stored with a profusion of bay trees, and ivy, interspersed with a great variety of aromattick shrubs, which perfumed the air with the most delightful fragrance. I immediately knew our author by his strong resemblance to the only authentick portrait of him, which belonged to the late Duke of Chandos, and of which I have three copies by eminent masters. He appeared to be a very handsome man, above the middle size, and extremely well made. The upper part of his head

son, to which however he added a contradictory postscript of his own. He afterwards went to Barbadoes, where he died in great poverty about the year 1770.

was

was almost entirely denuded of hair ; his eyes were uncommonly vivid, and his countenance was strongly marked by that frankness of air, and gentle benignity, which all his contemporaries have attributed to him. At the top of the hill he had found out a pleasant even lawn, where he was playing at bowls with Spencer, Sir John Suckling, little John Hales, and two other friends ; wholly inattentive to what was going forward in the Court, though Apollo was seated but a few paces from him. He had been hunting at an early hour of the morning (as I learned from his conversation) in the adjoining plains of Phocis, with Diana (who was then on a visit to her brother) and a bevy of her nymphs, who were now spectators of the game in which he was engaged. Recollecting the numerous proofs which his writings (corroborated by the testimony of his contemporaries) exhibit, of the tenderness of his heart and his passionate admiration of the fairer part of the creation, whose innumerable graces add a zest to all the pleasures, and sooth and alleviate all the cares of life, I was not surprised to hear him tell one of his female associates

associates in the chase, that his sport that day had far exceeded any amusement of the same kind he had ever partaken of in his sublunary state. His old and surly antagonist, Ben Jonson, was seated on an empty cask, looking on the game, in which from the great corpulency and unwieldiness of his frame he was unable to join. Being now unfurnished with his beloved sack, he was obliged to betake himself to the pure stream of the Castalian spring, of which an immense flaggon stood near him; and he appeared to have taken such large potations of it, that he was become perfectly bloated and dropsical.

WHEN I had urged the principal topicks which have been enlarged upon in the present Inquiry, and the Counsel of the other side had done pleading, Apollo proceeded to pronounce sentence. He began with observing, that this was one of the most important causes that had ever been argued in that court; not only as it concerned the history and reputation of the greatest poet that the world had seen since the days of Homer, but also involved in it the history of language, and of that species of poetical composition

over which two of his assessors on the bench particularly presided. That the rights of authors were as sacred as any other, and that the Statute in this case made and provided had very wisely guarded their literary property from every kind of invasion, by securing to them for a certain period an exclusive privilege of printing and publishing their works, for their own benefit. That the present, however, was entirely a new case, no mention being made in the Act of the injury which might be done to the reputation of poets, long after their death, by attributing to them miserable trash printed from pretended ancient manuscripts, made in some obscure corner *for the nonce*, and thus debasing and adulterating their genuine performances, which had been admired for ages, by the most impure and base alloy : that this offence, though not within the letter, was clearly within the spirit and equity of the statute, and was a still greater injury than that expressly provided against, inasmuch as that only affected the property of an author, whereas this robbed him of that good name and reputation which to all men of sensibility is dearer than life itself.

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He added, that to remove all doubts in future, he thought it highly necessary that the Act on this subject should be explained and amended, and he hoped a select committee of poets would draw up a bill for that purpose. Without however waiting for such an explanatory act, he thought himself fully justified on the ground before stated, in pronouncing the sentence of the law in the present case, in which the whole court were unanimous. He therefore ordered in the first place that a continual *bue and cry* should be made for one year after the original contriver and fabricator of those MISCELLANEOUS PAPERS which had been recently published in a folio volume, and attributed to the illustrious Shakspeare and others; that a perpetual injunction should issue to prevent the further sale of them, and that the whole impression now remaining in the hands of the Editor should immediately be delivered up to the Usher of the Court; and when a proper fire had been made of the most baleful and noxious weeds, that all the Copies should be burned by Dr. Farmer, Mr. Steevens,

and myself, assisted by Mr. Tyrwhitt,²²⁴ who I perceived was honoured with a seat on the bench, and whose polite demeanour and thoughtful aspect displayed all that urbanity and intelligence for which he was distinguished in life : (for in this calenture of the brain, your Lordship cannot but have observed that the imagination often unites the most discordant circumstances, and without any difficulty brings together the future and the past, the living and the dead.)—He should not, however, (the God of Verse added,) content himself with vindicating the reputation of this his favourite son ; but, as his Court involved a criminal as well as a civil jurisdiction, should proceed to give sentence on those persons who had been arraigned at the bar, for giving a certain degree of counte-

²²⁴ It is not, I believe, generally known, that the very learned editor of Chaucer was himself a poet. While he was yet at college, (1749,) he published a poem entitled “ An Epistle to Florio at Oxford,” which I have never met with, but I have been informed by a very good judge that it abounds with poetical merit. He also published at Oxford, “ Translations in Verse. Mr. Pope’s *Messiah*, Mr. Philips’s *Splendid Shilling*, in Latin ; the Eighth Isthmian of Pindar in English.” 4to. 1752.

nance and support to this audacious fiction. As their offence was not of a very heinous kind, he should treat them with lenity ; and the punishment, being wholly discretionary in the court, should be proportioned to the various degrees of guilt in the offenders. With respect to the multitude of persons of each sex and of all ages and denominations, who had flocked during the preceding year to see these spurious papers, and expressed the highest admiration of them, (they were so brown and so yellow, so vastly old, and so vastly curious !) the Ringleaders, who were then in custody, should be dismissed with only a gentle reproof, and an admonition never again to pronounce judgment on matters with which they were not conversant, without taking the advice of Counsel learned in the laws —— of Parnassus :— but on a small group of hardened offenders, who were placed at the bar by themselves, and did not appear to me to be more than seven or eight, ²²⁵ he thought himself bound to

²²⁵ In this group I did not see my friend, the learned and ingenious Author of the “ Essay on the writings and

to inflict a much more severe punishment. That if these gentlemen had modestly and ingenuously said that they had too hastily given a judgment on a matter which they did not understand,—that they knew nothing of old hand-writing, and nothing of old language, (which he conceived they might have done without any impeachment of their understandings,) he should have had great tenderness for them. But inasmuch as they had pertinaciously adhered to error after it had been made as manifest as his own Sun at noon-day, and clung to an opi-

genius of Pope," who, though he has passed his seventieth year, retains all the ardour and vivacity of youth; nor a very respectable clergyman well known to the learned world, and eminently distinguished for his love and knowledge of the fine arts, his literature, and suavity of manners; nor another very worthy friend, who presides at one of our revenue-boards, with great credit to himself and advantage to the publick; a scholar, a man of excellent taste, and much various knowledge; all of whom, though at first, and on a cursory view, they were dazzled by the quantity and specious appearance of this mass of imposture, always expressed themselves with great moderation and reserve on the subject, and never gave a decided opinion on hand-writing and phraseology to which the course of their studies had not led them to pay any particular attention.

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nion because they had once given it, which they were unable to maintain and unwilling to retract, he thought they ought to be made a publick example. That in every sentence he pronounced he kept in mind the rule of a great judge of their own nation, “always remembering when he found himself swayed to pity, that there was ALSO A PITY DUE TO THE COUNTRY ;” and that he wished the tribunals of that nation, (which on account of the eminent poets it had produced was extremely dear to him,) whether consisting of *one*, or of *one dozen*, would always keep that just rule before their eyes. That the pity to the country, in the present instance, was, by the punishment of these offenders, (who, though not so guilty as the undiscovered principal, yet, as accessories after the fact, had a considerable degree of guilt,) to maintain and establish truth and honesty, the best supporters of all human dealings, and to prevent the propagation of error, and the success of forgery and imposture.—The pains and penalties however of that Court extending only to that kind
of

of chastisement which men of wit best know how to inflict, he ordered that Butler, Dryden, Swift, and Pope, should forthwith compose four copies of verses on the subject, either ballad, epigram, or satire, as their several fancies might direct ; and that, after he had affixed his sign-manual to them, they should be conveyed by Mercury to England, and inserted for one month in the Poets' Corner of all the loyal Morning and Evening Newspapers of London, to the end that each of these credulous partisans of folly and imposture should remain

“ Sacred to ridicule his whole life long,
 “ And the sad burthen of some merry song.”

ON this mild and just sentence being pronounced, all the poetick tribe who were within hearing gave a loud shout of applause, which drew Shakspeare and his companions from their game, and awakened me from my dream.

FAREWELL, my dear Lord ! You are, I know, too well convinced of my unalterable esteem and attachment, to need any
publick

publick assurances on that head ; and therefore I shall only add in the usual style of papers intended for the publick view, that I have the honour to be, &c.

EDMOND MALONE.

QUEEN-ANNE-STREET, EAST,
March 19, 1796.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX,

NUMBER I.

ORIGIN AND HISTORY OF PROMISSORY NOTES AND PAPER-CREDIT.

THE inquiry into the authenticity of the note of hand, said to have been given by Shakspeare to John Heminges in the year 1589,¹ is naturally

¹ It has been already printed in p. 133; but in order that the arguments of my ingenious and learned friend may appear to the best advantage, and be fully understood, I shall give it a place here also :

“ *One moneth from the date hereof I doe promyse to paye*
“ *to my good and Worthye Freynd John Hemyng the sume*
“ *of five Pounds and five shillings of English Monye as a*
“ *recompense for hys greate trouble in settling and doinge*
“ *much for me at the Globe Theatre as also for hys trouble*
“ *in going downe for me to statford. Witness my Hand*
“ *W^m Shakspere.*

“ *Sepember the Nynth 1589.*”

In the multitude of objections to this spurious Promissory Note, I forgot to take notice of the phrase *going down* to Stratford, for that is the place meant, “ save, as Fluellen says, the phrase is a little variations.” The pre-eminence of the Capital over the Country was then without doubt as fully acknowledged as it is at present : but though the inferiority

naturally connected with the history of personal securities and paper-credit in England. The in-

of every other part of the kingdom is now marked by our constantly using the phrases of "going *down* to the Country," and "coming *up* to London," there is no ground for supposing that this was the language of Shakspeare's age. I have never met with it in any of the familiar letters of the time, where, if the phrase had then been in use, it would undoubtedly have been found.

"The *Globe theatre*," which I also omitted to notice, is equally objectionable. When they spoke of the playhouses of that time, they said the *Globe*, the *Rose*, or the *Curtain*, not the *Globe theatre*, &c. So in the Contract between Henslowe, Alleyn, and Streete, for building the Fortune play-house,—"and with such like steares, &c. as are made and contrived in and to the late erected play-house on the Bancke, in the said parish of St. Saviours, called *the Globe*."

So also in a stage-contract, which will appear in a subsequent page, (Appendix, No IV.)—"used or to be used or exercised within the play-house of the said P. H. and E. A. commonly called **THE FORTUNE**." Again, in a Memorandum by Edward Alleyn (Shakspeare's **PLAYS and POEMS** Vol. I. Part II. p. 43): "What **THE FORTUNE** [not the Fortune theatre] cost me, Nov. 1599."

Again, in Randolph's **MUSES LOOKING-GLASS**, 1632:
———That the **GLOBE**

"Hath been consumed; the **PHOENIX** burnt to ashes,
"The **FORTUNE** whipt for a blind whore; **BLACKFRYERS**
"He wonders how it scaped demolishing."

See also the title-page to **OTHELLO**, 4to. 1622: "The tragedy of **OTHELLO**, as it was played at **THE GLOBE** on the Bankside, and at the private house in the Black-friers."

If Heminges had thought it necessary to add any word after "the *Globe*," it would have been the plain English word, *play-house*, not *theatre*.

strument is very properly entitled a *note of hand*. In all its leading characteristicks it closely corresponds with the *promissory notes*, which under the familiar name of *notes of hand*, are current at this day. It begins with the time of future payment ; contains merely a “ promise to pay,” without any antecedent acknowledgement of a debt ; and is authenticated by the signature only, without a seal. A question therefore arises whether any such instrument is known to have been in use at that period, and what were the instruments, most nearly resembling a *promissory note*, which were then in use ; and the result will be still more satisfactory, if the time can be positively ascertained, when such instruments as this ascribed to Shakespeare, first came into circulation, and were established by law.

ENOUGH has been already done, in all probability, to satisfy every candid inquirer of the fabrication in the present instance. But the subject altogether is curious, and may not be uninteresting in a country which has carried its commerce to such an unexampled height, by the aid, in a great degree, of these very promissory notes. One considerable source of information has hitherto escaped the search of professed writers on Commerce. They have occasionally drawn some materials, though not all they might, from the statute-book, but they have neglected the Reports of proceedings in Westminster-Hall, and Law-treat-

ises on the nature and forms of instruments. The study of these authorities, in black-letter and barbarous French, interlarded with as barbarous Latin and obsolete English, all three full of abbreviations, is not very inviting; but there are few diggers and delvers after antient customs and manners in the mines of antiquity who would not find enough to reward their labour, if they sometimes followed the vein by that leader.

THE personal securities used in the time of Shakspeare, and for centuries before, were either *Obligations*, now commonly called Bonds, with a penalty and condition; or *Bills*, sometimes denominated *bills of debt* or *bills obligatory*. The latter are chiefly to the present purpose. They were single bonds without any penalty or condition; but they were equally *deeds*, requiring to be *signed sealed* and *delivered*.² In one of the oldest cases, where a bill was ruled to be invalid,³ one of the grounds appears to have been that it had no clause expressing the sealing, though it seems to have been actually sealed. It would be idle to multiply authorities to prove that there was always a seal to these bills. One more may be sufficient,⁴ from the time of Shakspeare. The case arose on a bill dated only three years before the pretended

² Cowell, in *v. Bill, & Co.* Lit. 272.

³ Year-book, 40. E. III. p. 2.

⁴ Talbot and Godbolt. Yelv. 137 & 147. 6 Jac.

note of hand ; and it is a memorable instance, where an unfortunate retainer of the Law, the clerk of a learned Serjeant, burned his fingers with his own sealing-wax. The poor man, (as lawyers do not always succeed the best in their own affairs) drew a bill, binding himself by mistake, instead of his master. He acknowledged the receipt of 40*l.* for his master's use, to be paid the Michaelmas following ; but forgetting to express by whom it was to be paid, was held to be responsible himself, as he had sealed the bill.

THE use of the seal indeed was so familiar at this period, that it was even applied on other occasions, where, with rules of evidence less favourable, no person now would expect it to be affixed. We learn from an act of Parliament passed in 1610,^s that Shop-books and other accompt-books between persons who were in a course of dealing with each other, were received in evidence, even for the party by whom they were kept. Much more then, and according to the strictest rules of evidence would they be binding against the party who made any particular entry in them, such as were probably those acknowledgements of debt in the text, extracted from the old theatrical Register of Dulwich : yet it was a common practice with Merchants and Tradesmen in London at the latter end of Queen Elizabeth's reign, to have

^s 7 Jac. c. 12.

regular *bills of debt* or *obligations* inserted in their books by their debtors, signed, sealed, and delivered.⁶

ONE of the names of the single bill, that of a *bill of debt*, by which it most frequently passed about the time of Shakspeare, points to an express acknowledgement of a debt as an essential part of the instrument. Accordingly West who compiled his *SYMBOLEOGRAPHY* the very year after the supposed *note of hand* in question, defines a bill or obligation to be “ a deed, whereby the Obligor doth knowlege himself to owe unto the Obligee a certaine summe of money or other thing. In which (continues he) besides the parties’ names, are to be considered the summe or thing due, and the time, place, and manner of paiment or delivery thereof.” All his precedents, of which there are many, some more some less formal, have of course all the parts required by himself, as well as the clause of *sealing*. One of his precedents of a bill for a thing lent has probably been very seldom copied, at least in our times. It may be well however to preserve the memory of it, as it may shortly be of utility to some harmless people of antiquated prejudices, if the anti-crusaders of modern philosophy should succeed in making the thing as scarce in this country, as it was

⁶ Fox and Wright, 40 Eliz. Cro. Eliz. 613.

in times of ancient ignorance. It is an acknowledgement of having received, and an engagement to re-deliver—a Bible.

It is true that a *bill obligatory* might be constituted by any words of power to create an obligation to pay, without any acknowledgement of owing. And it was early so ruled. But of the real bills, actually put in issue, very few indeed, if any, will be found before the 17th Century, that are without some direct admission of the debt.

ALL bills that have been preserved to us at full length in reports from the Year-books downwards, have some phrase or word of introduction. The more methodical and technical begin with “*Know all men by these presents*”, “*Be it known*”, or “*This bill witnesseth*”, or something to that effect, whether in Latin or English: the looser and less regular are ushered in with the word “*Memorandum*” or some abbreviation of it. This word is to be found at the head of the oldest instrument of the kind on record in the reign of Edward the III^d; and it stood unmoved in the time of Charles the Ist. THE TOUCH-STONE OF COMMON ASSURANCES was published in 1641. It goes under the name of Sheppard, but is believed to have been the production of Mr. Justice Doderidge, who was raised to the bench in the life-time of Shakspeare; and that book has no less than fourteen or fifteen of the shorter and more simple forms,⁷ to every one of which

⁷ Tit. Obligation. p. 68.

without

without exception the word "*Memorandum*" is prefixed.

THE *obligatory* or promissory part of the ancient bill was generally expressed by the words, "*to be paid,*" a translation of the Latin word "*Solvendum.*" It is observable that when the phrase "*I promise to pay*" first crept into a bill of debt, about a century before our Poet, an objection was taken to it by Mr. Serjeant Vavasour.⁸ "Here are no words of obligation (said he); a promise does not constitute an obligation." The Court, it is true, over-ruled the objection; the new phraseology however, was not adopted, but the accustomed form still continued to prevail.

ANOTHER circumstance in which the old *bills of debt* differed from our modern *notes of hand* was in the grammatical structure of the sentence. The term fixed for future payment always followed, and never preceded the obligatory words of the bill. This is invariable in all the instances to be found down to the period now in question, of 1589. The concluding clause too was always full: not "*witness my hand,*" but "*in witesse whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seale*" or to that effect; as will be found in every one of West's precedents, and wherever else the form of a bill is set forth at length. Neither was the date ever

⁸ Year-book. 22 E. IV. 22.

placed by itself in a corner, but embodied in the bill.

BUT as examples best illustrate, it may be proper to add two or three precedents of different kinds. They will be found to correspond generally in their form with the entries taken from Henslowe's Register.

The first shall be the bill where the phrase "I promise to pay" originally appeared. It ran thus: "*Md.* that I Master Jo. Hatelly have received of W. K. twenty pound, the which twenty pound I the said Maister Jo. Hatelly promise to pay to K. In witness whereof I set to my seale," &c. &c.

The following is very few years prior in date to the pretended *note of hand*:¹⁰

"*Me.* That I owe to A. B. twenty pound to be paid in watchets.—In witness whereof," &c.

It has been hinted above that some benefit might occasionally be reaped by Antiquaries, if they were somewhat better Lawyers; and it is but justice to say here in return, that Lawyers would sometimes not be the worse for being better Antiquaries. The modern Abridgers, Viner, Bacon,¹¹

⁹ Year-Book, 22 E. IV. 22.

¹⁰ Hil. 26 Eliz. And. 117.

¹¹ Tit. Obligation.

and others, for *watchets*" (that is, watchet-lights, a sort of taper,) have substituted "*watches*." An Antiquary who should take their word without going back to the genuine black-letter, would think he had made a rare discovery.

The next specimen is still nearer to the date of 1589, and must be presumed of good authority. It is the bill of Mr. Serjeant Gaudy's Clerk, who probably followed the most approved form in popular use. He did not suffer for departing from sound precedents, but rather for adhering to them too closely. He was fined for wanting judgement to vary them as circumstances required. The words are, "*Memor.* that I have received of Edward Talbot to the use of my Master, Master Serjeant Gaudy, the sum of forty pound to be paid at Michaelmas following. In witness whereof," &c.

THIS bill is described to have been dated in the 28th of Elizabeth. It probably ran like the following, which is dated in the 32d of the same reign, or 1590, and is the only English precedent in West, for payment of a debt at a future day certain :

" BEE it knowne unto all men by these presents
 " that I, T. K. of D. in the county of S. yeoman,
 " do owe unto T. S. of the said towne and county,
 " gentleman, 100 l. of good and lawfull English
 money,

“ money, to be paid to the said I. S. his heires,
 “ executors or administrators, upon the feast of
 “ Easterday next comming after the date hereof:
 “ for which paiment wel and truly to be made,
 “ I bind me and mine heires firmly by these pre-
 “ sents. In wittesse whereof I have hereunto
 “ put my hand and seale. Dated the first day of
 “ Januarie, in the two and thirtieth year of our
 “ Soveraign Lady El.” &c.

BUT it may be asked, whatever were the forms
 alone recognized by the common law, were there
 no instruments, like this in Shakspeare's name,
 then used by merchants and others in their confi-
 dential transactions?—It will be found, on the con-
 trary, that the want of them was a theme of com-
 plaint for more than half a century after his
 death.

MALINES wrote his book called *Lex Mercatoria*,
 or Law-Merchant, in 1622, about six years after
 the death of our great dramattick poet. This writ-
 ter allots two whole chapters, the xiith and xiiith
 as well as half of the xith to the subject of *bills of*
debt or *bills obligatory*, as employed in buying and
 selling by the merchants-adventurers of Amster-
 dam, Middleburgh, and Hamburgh. He tells
 us, that “ in the East Countries,” (that is, in the
 countries about the Baltick,) “ and sometimes in
 “ the Low-Countries, they will put a *seale*,” but

that sealing is not necessary." The use and transfer of these bills in commerce he declares to be " a laudable custome *not practised in England,*" but which he thinks " might with great facility " neverthelesse be established, and would be very " beneficiall to the King and the Commonwealth " in generall." He is very full in explaining the nature and all the circumstances of one of these *bills obligatory*, as of a thing almost unknown; and he inserts the form, which is a foreign form, but which, except in being made payable to the bearer, and having no seal or mention of a seal, resembles in general substance the precedents of West. If any thing, it is more full:

" I A.B. Merchant of Amsterdam, doe acknow-
 " ledge by these presents to be truly indebted
 " to the honest C. D. English merchant dwelling
 " at Middleborough, in the summe of five hundred
 " pounds currant money, for merchandize, which
 " is for commodities received of him to my
 " contentment, which summe of five hundred
 " pound as aforesaid I do promise to pay unto
 " the said C. D. (or the bringer hereof) within
 " six months next after the date of these presents :
 " in witesse whereof I have subscribed the same
 " at Amsterdam the 10th of July 1622, *Stilo*
 " *novo. A. B.*"

ONE of this author's remarks plainly shews, that he, like West, thought the acknowledgment of the debt to be of the essence of the bill. "The
 " Civil-Law, and the Law-Merchant, (says he)
 " doe require, that *the bill shall declare for what*
 " the debt *groweth*, either for merchandise or
 " monie, or any other lawfull consideration."

UNDER the Protectorate of Cromwell, in the year 1651, John Marius, a Notary Public, wrote a work entituled "Advice concerning Bills of Exchange;" and in 1655 printed a second edition much enlarged. This he gives as "the
 " crop of four and twenty years experience in
 " his employment in the art of a Notary Pub-
 " like, which (he tells us) he yet practised at
 " the Royal Exchange in London both for *In-*
 " *land* and outland instruments." The work is a folio of forty close pages; but though it has so much on *inland* as well as outland bills of exchange and letters of credit, and contains short directions for merchants' book-keeping, there is not a single syllable upon *bills of debt*, or *bills obligatory*. We learn too that even the validity of *inland* bills of exchange under the Law-merchant was then controverted by foreign writers, and was clearly not acknowledged by the Common Law of England.

Just before the Restoration in 1660 a book called "Amphithalami" was published by Abraham Liset, which amongst other things contains, "Instructions for a merchant." What this writer says upon *bills of debt* or *bills obligatory* is extracted and abridged from Malines. He continues the same complaint that "this laudable custom was not practised in England," and the same instances to enforce its adoption in this country: It is to be inferred therefore, that no alteration with regard to these bills had taken place from the time of Malines.

Soon after the Restoration, the rigour of the Common Law gave way by degrees to the less formal instruments of the Law-Merchant founded on the Civil Law. Bills of exchange were the first mercantile instruments thus favoured, and with respect to them the custom of merchants was allowed to be pleaded. This had been done before with regard to *foreign* bills of exchange; but now these bills extended to all money-transactions between all men residing at a distance from each other, and at last every person by drawing a bill of exchange was considered by the law as having become a merchant in that particular act. The various stages of their progress are thus shortly, but satisfactorily, related by Chief Justice Treby of the Common Pleas, in the year 1696.¹²

¹² Bromwich and Loyd, 8 W. III. 2 Lutw. 1585.

“ Bills of exchange (says he) at first extended
 “ only to merchant strangers trading with English
 “ merchants, and afterwards to *inland* bills between
 “ merchants trading the one with the other here
 “ in England, and afterwards to all traders and
 “ negociators, and OF LATE to all persons traf-
 “ ficking or not.”

WHEN *inland bills of exchange* had gained a footing in Westminster-Hall, and were judged to be good between all traders and negociators, it seemed an easy step to establish also in some form or other, the transferrable *bill of debt* or *bill obligatory* used by merchants abroad, and so much and long recommended for introduction here. The origin of the new *promissory note* is distinctly attributed to the Goldsmiths; and such a note in our books of reports after the Revolution is often called by its familiar name of a *Goldsmith's note*. The period of time to which an authority, that will hereafter be quoted at length, refers the beginning of these notes, is about the year 1673.

IT is well known that previous to the year 1640 the mint was the usual place of deposit for the running cash of merchants. The seizure of the money there by Charles the 1st. in 1640, destroyed for ever the credit of the Mint. The frequent elopement of clerks with all the money
 in

in their hands to one army or the other, when the Civil War broke out, prevented the merchants from leaving cash in the charge of cashiers at home, and thus about the year 1645 the Goldsmiths became the general bankers.¹³ The situation of the country, first from the real and necessary distresses of the Parliament and Protector, and afterwards from the profusion of Charles II. gave the new bankers great opportunities of making emoluments, and of tempting all men of property by the allowance of a small interest to deposit money in their hands. Thus their trade grew and flourished till the year 1667, when, an alarm taking place in consequence of the Dutch sailing up the Thames and burning some ships at Chatham, a run was made on the Goldsmiths, and their credit was shaken. They seem however to have been recovering from that blow, when Charles II. in 1671-2, took the violent measure of shutting up the Exchequer, and impounding there between thirteen and fourteen hundred thousand pounds of their principal money, beside the current interest due upon it.

PREVIOUS to this period, their prosperity was so encreasing, and money came so fast into their hands, that they were perpetually employed in

¹³ Anderson's HIST. of COMMERCE, under the years 1645, 1665, and 1672: on the authority of a curious pamphlet printed in 1676.

devising

devising new modes of disposing it to advantage without being under the necessity of having recourse to their own paper-credit to support their trade. But the shutting of the Exchequer threw the whole commerce of the city into confusion, and made extraordinary expedients necessary to sustain every part of the system. It is just about this time that we find the Goldsmiths to have first issued their *promissory notes*.

THIS date of their first introduction seems indeed to be very nearly ascertained from contemporary evidence. A little anonymous work of considerable merit was published in 1680, under the title of "The Interests of Princes and States." It is said in the prefatory Advertisement to have been written some years before, and on that ground an apology is made for any thing which from subsequent changes might not apply at the time of publication. The internal evidence in truth dates it between the years 1668 and 1672. Now it clearly shows *promissory notes* not to have been in circulation when it was written: for in a list of measures which the author proposes for the interests of this kingdom, he reckons as the fifth, that "the transferring of *bills of debt* should be "made good in law: it being, as he says, a "great advantage to traders (especially young men "of small stocks) to be able to supply themselves with money, *by the sale of their own bills "of debt.*"

ON the other hand, that the introduction of these notes had taken place between the writing and publishing of that passage we learn from a case of the year 1680¹⁴ (the earliest Law Report in which they are mentioned); and there they appear in a way which plainly shews them at once to have been common among merchants, and yet not received into general use in the new form with a signature only. The action was brought on a *note* by which one Hentley promised to pay to the bearer thereof on the delivery of the note, 100*l.* But *the note was sealed* according to the old practice, and was argued as a scroll which had become a *perfect deed* by the delivery of it to the plaintiff, who was then the bearer. This was a moment of public ferment, and the Chief Justice, Sir Francis Pemberton, had not many days filled his situation, to which he was promoted on the removal of Sir William Scroggs, in consequence of his impeachment by Parliament. He may therefore have been desirous, circumstanced as he was, of doing what would be popular. He inclined to the doctrine of the Plaintiff's Counsel, and observed, that *when a merchant promises to pay to the bearer of a note, any who brings the note shall be paid*; but Mr. Justice Jones said, that *it was the custom of merchants* which made that good. The decision was adjourned, and the sequel has not been reported.

¹⁴ Shelden and Hentley, E. 33. Car. II. 2 Show. 160. 161.

THE success which attended the adoption of *promissory notes*, one of the projects urged in vain during the usurpation, seems to have suggested the notion of reducing others also, connected with that, into practice. ¹⁵ Accordingly in 1683 the scheme of a general bank, supported by a numerous association of subscribers, (a scheme which had been proposed in different shapes under Cromwell) was revived by Dr. Chamberlain and Mr. Robert Murray, ¹⁶ who had lately established the Penny Post. Though this scheme of a Bank did not take effect, yet as it probably gave the hint of the Bank of England, erected by other more fortunate projectors about eleven years after, it may not be unentertaining to insert here a curious account of the plan from the unpublished papers of Aubrey the antiquary, with which I have been furnished by Mr. Malone :

“ THE Penny Post was set up on our Lady-
 “ day, (being Friday) A^o Dⁿⁱ. 1680; a most
 “ ingenious and useful project, invented by Mr.
 “ Robert Murray first, and then Mr. Dockwra
 “ joined with him. The Duke of York seized
 “ on it in 1682. Mr. Murray was formerly clerk
 “ to the general commissioners for the revenue
 “ of Ireland, and afterwards clerk to the com-
 “ missioners of the grand Excise of England;
 “ and was the first that invented and introduced

¹⁵ Anderfon's History, 1651.

¹⁶ Ibid. 1683.

“ into this city the Club of Commerce, consist-
 “ ing of one of each trade ; whereof there were
 “ after very many elected and are still continued in
 “ this city. And he also contrived and set up
 “ the office or BANK OF CREDIT at Devonshire
 “ House in Bishopgate Street without, where
 “ men depositing their goods and merchandize,
 “ were furnished with bills of current credit, at
 “ two thirds or three fourths of the value of the
 “ said goods according to the intrinsick value of
 “ money ; whereby the deficiency of coin might
 “ be fully supplied : and for rendering the same
 “ current, a certain number of traders, *viz.* ten
 “ or twenty of each trade (whereof there be five
 “ hundred and ten several traders within the city,)
 “ were to be assembled or formed into such a
 “ society or company of traders, as might
 “ among them complete the whole body of com-
 “ merce ; whereby any possessed of the said cur-
 “ rent credit might be furnished among them-
 “ selves with any kind of goods and merchandize
 “ as effectually as for money elsewhere”.¹⁷

BUT the great epoch in the history of paper-
 credit, is the formation of the Bank of England
 in 1694, and there we have on the authority of

¹⁷ From a paper entitled *Nouvelles*. MS. Aubrey. in Mus.
 Ashmol.

Mr. Aubrey adds, that “ Robert Murray was a citizen
 of London, a Millener, [Andersocn calls him an upholsterer,]
 of the company of Clothworkers ; his father a Scotchman,
 his mother English ; born in the Strand, Dec. 12, 1633.”

Parliament some material evidence applying to our immediate object. There is a clause in the act of Incorporation which plainly indicates the true birth and parentage of promissory notes, as derived from the bills of debt, or bills obligatory, of former times. It is expressly provided “ that all *bills* “ *obligatory, under the seal* of that corporation, might “ be assignable *toties quoties*; and that such assignments should absolutely vest the property “ in the assignees.”¹⁸ This latter provision was necessary to obviate one strong objection originally made, as we learn from Malines, to the transfer of *bills obligatory*, or *bills of debt*: “ that “ by the Common Law debts were *chofes in action*, “ whereof no property could passe by assignement “ or alienation.” The original *bank notes* were actually *sealed bills*,¹⁹ and bore an interest of two pence by the day for every hundred pounds.

THE establishment of the Bank of England gave a new spring to the minds of projectors, and among other plans soon after published, was one for promoting the circulation of notes of hand and letters of credit. This plan did not take effect; but the circulation gained ground. Soon afterwards this sort of Paper-credit had the sanction of the State. In 1696 Exchequer-bills were first issued.

IN the mean time, however, the Common Law

¹⁸ 5 and 6 of W. and M. c. 20.

¹⁹ Anderson's History, 1694.

had made a powerful stand against these notes of the Goldsmiths; especially against the legal operation which their inventors and patrons endeavoured to give them. It was attempted to assimilate them to bills of exchange, and to bring actions upon them in the same manner under the custom of merchants. Indeed, the mere signature of an acceptor to a bill of exchange being allowed to raise an obligation of payment to the holder over of the bill, it was not unnatural to conclude that a signature to a direct promise of payment in another form would be admitted as equally binding, and capable of being pleaded in the same way. And it may perhaps have been to avoid an apparent distinction on the face of the instrument, that the first part of the old form recommended by Malines for a bill obligatory (the acknowledgement of the debt) was omitted, and the subsequent promise to pay alone retained. The change in the local arrangement of the date, which was now taken out of the body of the note, and placed separately in a more conspicuous part, generally at the top, was probably made that it might more readily present itself to the eye for the calculation of the discount. At the same time the old formal clause of attestation was cut down to "Witness my hand."

A CASE arose upon one of these bills so early as the second year of William and Mary.²⁰ It

²⁰ *Horton v. Coggs*, 2 W. & M. 3 Lev. 299.

was

was an action brought in the Court of Common Pleas against Coggs, a Goldsmith. A Jury found a verdict against him on his promissory note; but upon a motion in arrest of judgement it was ruled that the custom pleaded of being bound to pay the bearer, was too general. It was said too (as we learn from Chief Justice Holt in a subsequent case)²¹ that such notes were not bills of exchange.

It would be to no purpose to mention every case which followed; but it may be right cursorily to notice, that in the earliest the defendants appear to have been actual Goldsmiths. The Court of Common Pleas seemed at one time inclined to favour these notes as a great convenience to trade; but the Court of King's Bench was strenuous in opposing them. It was in the first year of Queen Anne that the doctrine was there settled on various points in different cases.

THE first of these (and an important testimony it is on the present inquiry) was a suit instituted against a person of the name of Martin, on his promissory note payable to *I. S. or Order*; ²² and one of the counts was upon the custom of merchants, as for a bill of exchange. It was argued that though it never had been endorsed, yet by

²¹ Clerke & Martin.

²² Clerke & Martin, 1 Anne, 2 L^d Raym. 757.

being

being made payable to order, instead of the bearer, the note was brought within the principle of a bill of exchange. But Chief Justice Holt was against it “ *with all his might,*” as the Reporter says. He said “ that the note could not be a bill “ of exchange : that *the maintaining of these actions “ upon such notes were innovations upon the rules of the “ Common Law ; and that it amounted to the setting up “ a new sort of specialty, unknown to the Common Law, “ and invented in Lombard Street,* which attempted “ in these matters of bills of exchange to give “ laws to Westminster-Hall.”

THE custom of merchants was there laid generally. In another case²³ which followed immediately after, the special custom of London was pleaded. But the Court held this also to be a void custom, since it bound a man to pay money without a consideration. In the same year one of these notes having been established in the Common Pleas on an action which went in one count of the declaration upon the custom of Merchants, the judgement was reversed by a writ of Error in the King’s Bench.²⁴

STILL the merchants persisted, and the next year, 1703, a new point was tried. A *promissory note payable to order*, was put in suit by an *En-*

²³ Clerke & Martin, 1 Anne, 2 L^d Raym. p. 759.

²⁴ Cutting & Williams, 1 Anne, 1 Salk. 25.

dorsee against the Drawer.²⁵ And there the whole history of these instruments as well as of *inland* bills of exchange appears fully from the best evidence. Chief Justice Holt said, that he remembered when actions upon *inland* bills of exchange first began. The action was against the acceptor, and a particular custom between London and Bristol was laid. Since that time these actions had become frequent, as the trade of the nation encreased. “ But *the notes in question* (added he) “ *are only an invention of the Goldsmiths in Lombard Street, who had a mind to make a law to bind all that dealt with them.* And sure to allow such a note to “ carry any lien with it, were to turn a piece of “ paper, which is in law but evidence of a parol “ contract, into a specialty : and besides it would “ empower one to assign that to another which he “ could not have himself; for since he to whom “ this note was made could not have this action, “ how can his assignee have it? These notes are “ not in the nature of bills of exchange; for the “ reason of the custom in bills of exchange is for “ the expedition of trade, and its safety, and likewise it hinders the exportation of money out of “ the realm.”

JUDGEMENT however being for the present postponed, on another day Chief Justice Holt declared, “ that he had desired to speak with

²⁵ Buller & Crips. 6 Mod. 29.

“ *two of the most famous merchants in London* to be
 “ informed of the mighty ill consequences that it
 “ was pretended would ensue by obstructing this
 “ course ; and that they had told him, it was very
 “ frequent with them to make such notes, and
 “ that they looked upon them as bills of ex-
 “ change, and that THEY HAD BEEN USED FOR A
 “ MATTER OF THIRTY YEARS ; and that not only
 “ *notes* but *bonds* for money were transferred fre-
 “ quently, and indorsed as bills of exchange :” —
 that is, obligations, and *bills obligatory under seal*,
 (which were one sort of bonds) were not even
 then, in the beginning of the present century,
 wholly driven out of use by the new promissory
 notes of Lombard-Street.

THE Chief Justice was as firm in the conscien-
 tious discharge of his duty against the Law-mer-
 chant, as on another memorable occasion he had
 been against the Law of Parliament. The mer-
 chants were foiled in all their attempts. Nothing
 therefore remained, but that resource, which Ma-
 lines tells us was the wish of many good Lawyers
 as well as Merchants in his days,—“ an act of
 “ Parliament to establish this course in England.”
 Accordingly such a law passed soon afterwards,²⁶
 making all promissory notes recoverable by
 action “ in the same manner as inland bills of
 “ exchange drawn according to the custom of

²⁶ 3 & 4 Ann. c. 9.

“merchants.” In consequence, *bills obligatory* under the seal of the Bank of England, and under the seals of individuals, disappeared together; all men substituted *notes of hand*, which, though in rather more accurate spelling and terser phraseology, ran in effect like this ascribed to Shakespeare above a century before; and “I promise to pay” universally succeeded to “Memorandum that I owe.” But the time of future payment continued to keep its station for many years in the body of the note.²⁷ It seems a very modern innovation indeed to place it in the beginning of the sentence.

ON looking back there is much in this little historical outline to arrest and occupy a contemplative mind. What was recommended in vain as a publick benefit to the Grandfather (for to King James was the work of Malines dedicated) was at last the lucky consequence of an arbitrary act, to which the Grandson was driven by his prodigality: and the system of PAPER-CREDIT, which thus had its origin in the bad faith of the last Protestant King of the House of Stuart, when after the Revolution it had acquired strength,

²⁷ *Smith v. Jarvis & Baily*, 2 L^d Raym. 1484. Trin. 13 Geo. I. & 1 Geo. II. *Burchell & Slocock*, *ibid.* 1545. Mich. 2 Geo. II.—*Youth's Introduction to Trade and Business*, 1737. tit. Promissory Notes.—*Cooke v. Colchan*, 2 Str. 1217. 18 Geo. II.

solidity, and body, from the establishment of the Bank of England, became a main prop and pillar of the settlement by which the immediate heirs of the House of Stuart were excluded for ever from the throne. But these are only sports of chance, that amuse rather than instruct. What is most worthy of attention and admiration is the excellent spirit of our Law. It accommodates itself, though slowly and with becoming deliberation, to the general law of Europe, where our intercourse with foreign countries demands it: we have seen it do so in regard to bills of exchange: and having once admitted a principle, it gradually expands itself to embrace the subject in its natural and just extent. Yet at the same time it resists innovations, however specious, which hold forth only internal convenience as their end, and leaves them to the wisdom of the Legislature; where, if they are of approved utility, they will seldom meet other than a favourable reception.

THE circulation of promissory notes however was not opposed by Westminster-Hall alone. Many of the mercantile interest, and even Sir Josiah Child among the rest originally declared against "the innovated practice of bankers, and the new invention of cashiering;"²⁸ to which all of his name have not continued his animosity. Nor did even the first proof of the benefits derived

²⁸ See his Discourses on Trade.

from this system preclude all invective against it. Our great ethick Poet, in his Moral Essay “on the Use of Riches,” breaks into the most animated satire upon this topick, while he too affords one more testimony to the recent introduction of that which he apostrophizes :

“ Blest Paper-Credit ! *last* and best supply,
 “ That lends corruption lighter wings to fly !
 “ Gold, imp’d by thee, can compass hardest things,
 “ Can pocket States, can fetch or carry Kings ;
 “ A single leaf shall waft an Army o’er,
 “ Or ship off Senates to some distant shore ;
 “ A leaf, like Sibyl’s, scatter to and fro
 “ Our fates and fortunes, as the wind shall blow :
 “ Pregnant with thousands flits the scrap unseen,
 “ And silent sells a King, or buys a Queen.”

If it were fair to attribute to this cause, as Pope himself does in his notes, all the striking events of a whole age, full as splendid a panegyrick might be made on the other side, if equal abilities could be found for the task. But without the glittering visions of poetry we have witnessed and still witness the most happy effects in the publick prosperity. The whole real and imaginary opulence of the nation is brought to bear effectively on commerce, like the capital of one firm. Even
 vices,

vices, the most selfish, are made to co-operate for the good of the Common-wealth. Avarice itself becomes liberal in parsimony and accumulation, and while by trusting the custody of its hoards to the banker, it escapes half the torments which are its immediate and natural punishment in the eternal order of things, it furnishes funds for the advances of the manufacturer, the adventures of the merchant, and the vast operations of the Statesman to maintain or extend the happiness, power, and glory, of his country. We do not now require to read, for we behold in every thing around us, the praise which Malines bestows on the system of paper-credit ; a praise no less just than eloquent, according to the fashion of his age. “ It is,” says he, “ as money paid by assignation, “ whereby very great matters are compassed in “ the trade of merchandise ; the commodities are “ sooner vented in all places ; the custome and “ impositions of Princes do increase ; the poore “ mechanicall people are set on worke ; men are “ better assured in their payments ; the counter- “ feiting of bils, and differences are prevented ; “ the more commodities there are sold, the less “ ready money is transported, and life is infused “ into traffick and trade for the generall good. “ And herein we see and may observe that things “ which be indeed, and things which are not in- “ deed, but taken to be indeed, may produce all “ one effect ; and every man is enabled with his

“own meanes and credit, to augment commerce.” Perhaps the pre-eminence of England among the States of Europe at this hour, compared with her subordinate rank then, even after the glorious reign of Elizabeth, is more to be attributed to the force of her public credit under this system, which gives her the direction of the great military powers on the Continent, than to the native strength of her own arms.

AND who is the mighty benefactor of his country, to whom we are indebted for all this? The evidence here collected to shew the origin and history of promissory notes seems to be full and weighty. But the whole is fallacy and error, if the note of hand attributed to Shakspeare be authentick. Writers on the Law-merchant, Compilers of Precedents in Common Law, sad Reporters of Westminster-Hall, famous Merchants of London, Lombard-street and Threadneedle-street, private Banks of Goldsmiths and the Bank of England, Judges and Juries, Year-books and Acts of Parliament, every thing must vanish before a ragged scrap of dirty paper, discovered we know not where, and produced we are never to know by whom. “All shall yield to the Mulberry-tree,” in a genuine box of which wood this precious relick no doubt must have been preserved. Shakspeare, though it was never suspected by his Commentator Pope when he wrote the passage
 quoted

quoted above, nor by his other Commentator Warburton, when in explaining that passage of Pope, he considered paper-credit as an invention since the time of William the Third,—Yes, Shakspeare himself not only modelled the language of our Stage, but formed the style of Lombard-Street. His daring imagination, which burst indignant from the trammels of Criticism, was not to be cramped and confined by the fetters of legal forms. In the prophetick spirit of a true Poet he gave unsealed notes of hand to his “Worthye Freyndes,” which in the next century but one were to become good securities in Law; and he hit on a happy concinnity in the arrangement of their contents, which was not generally attained by the slower talents of modern money-changers till our own days, after these instruments had been in circulation for more than half a century. No wonder then that the Merchants and Lawyers too of his time, when compared to him in their own way should all deserve to be set *onne bys Table offe loggerre beades*. It is but a small compensation to him for the loss of fame which he has suffered from the long oblivion of this most astonishing effort of his wonderful genius, that some new and extraordinary honours should be paid to his memory. The least which the Goldsmiths’ Company can do is, to erect a statue to him over the front-door of the Bank in brown *papier maché*. The countenance should be faithfully

fully copied from the “*whymysycalle conceyte*” of his own pencil, or the coloured drawing of him in the character of Bassanio. His “*ferrekyne*,” instead of “abundant ornaments of gold and silver,” might be damasked over with all the water-marks of all the paper-makers in his day ; and with his finger he might point to a scroll, not inscribed with the absurd rant of “Cloud-capt Towers and gorgeous Palaces,” which like many of the finest speeches in Lear we are in future to consider as the bungling interpolation of the theatre, but displaying his own note of hand to Heminges, in capitals of gold. For the execution of this laudable design, a subscription should be immediately opened to receive contributions of true ancient paper. Our noble families may spare without inconvenience the half-filled household-books, which remain disgraceful memorials of the paltry œconomy practised by their ancestors ; the publick offices may give the clippings and trimmings of dusty State papers ; and private Libraries can supply, without missing them, many superfluous blank-leaves from venerable folios and quartos. As an example, I here offer, in the name of old Malines, eight brown half-sheets from the copy of his work which now happens to lie before me ; and I trust, all black-letter Collectors in the kingdom will hasten to participate in this great act of national justice.

NUMB. II.

CONVEYANCE FROM WALKER TO SHAKSPEARE.

THIS INDENTURE MADE the tenth day of Marche, in the yeare of our Lord God according to the computacōn of the church of England one thousand six hundrede and twelve, and in the yeares of the reigne of our soveraigne Lord James by the grace of God king of England, Scotland ffrance and Ireland, defender of the faith, &c. that is to saie, of England, ffrance and Ireland the tenth, and of Scotland the six and fortith: Betweene Henry Walker Citizein and Minstrel of London of thone partie, and William Shakespeare of Stratforde Upon Avon in the countie of Warwick gentleman, William Johnson citizein and Vintner of London, John Jackson and John Hemyng of London gentlemen, on thother ptie; WITNESSETH, that the said Henry Walker for and in consideracōn of the some of one hundred and fortie pounds of lawful money of England to him in hand before thensealing hereof by the said William Shakespeare well and trulie paid, whereof and wherewth hee the said Henry Walker doth acknowledge himselfe fully satisfied and contented, and thereof and of every part or parcell thereof doth cleerlie acquite and discharge the saide William Shakespeare, his heires, executors, admīstrators, and assignes, and every of them, by theis p̄nts hath bargayned and soulded, and by theis p̄nts doth fullie cleerlie and absolutlie bargayne
and

and sell vnto the said William Shakespeare, William Johnson, John Jackson, and John Hem̄yng, their heires and assignes for ever, All that dwelling house or Tenement wth thappurtenāncs situate and being w^hin the Precinct Circuit and Compasse of the late black fryers London, sometymes in the tenure of James Gardyner Esqui^{re}, and since that in the tenure of John ffortescue gent, and now or late being in the tenure or occupacōn of one William Ireland or of his assignee or assignes ; abutting vpon a streete leading downe to PuddleWharffe on the east part, right against the kings Maiesties Wardrobe ; part of w^{ch} said Tenement is erected over a great gate leading to a Capitall Mesuage w^h sometyme was in the tenure of William Blackwell Esqui^{re} deceased, and since that in the tenure or occupacōn of the right Honorable Henry now Earl of Northumberland. And also all that plott of ground on the west side of the same Tenement w^{ch} was lately inclosed wth boords on two sides thereof by Anne Bacon, widowe, soe farre and in such sorte as the same was inclosed by the said Anne Bacon, and not otherwise ; and being on the thirde side inclosed wth an olde Brick wall ; Which said plott of ground was sometyme parcell and taken out of a great voide peece of ground lately vsed for a garden ; and also the soyle wherevpon the said Tenement standeth, and also the said Brick wall and boords w^{ch} doe inclose the said plott of ground : With free entrie, accesse, ingresse, egresse, and regresse, in by and through the said

greate gate and yarde there vnto the vsual dore of the said Tenement; And also all and singuler cello's, sollers, romes, lights, easiaments, profitts, comodities, and hereditaments whatsoever, to the said dwelling house or Tenement belonging or in any wise app'teyning; And the reversion and reversions whatsoever of all and singuler the premisses, and of every parcell thereof; And also all rents, and yearlie profitts whatsoever reserved and from hensforth to growe due and paiable vpon whatsoever lease, dimise or graunt, leases dimises or graunts, made of the premisses or of any parcell thereof, And also all the state, right, title, interest, propertie, vse, possession, clayme, and demaunde whatsoever w^{ch} hee the said Henry Walker now hath, or of right may, might, should, or ought to have, of in or to the premisses or any parcell thereof; And also all and every thé deeds, evidencs, charters, escripts, miniments, & writings whatsoever w^{ch} hee the said Henry Walker now hath, or any other person or persons to his vse have or hath, or which hee may lawfullie come by w^{thout} suite in the lawe, which touch or concerne the premisses onlie, or onlie any part or parcell thereof, Together wth the true coppies of all such deeds, evidencs, and writings as concerne the premisses (amoung other things) to bee written and taken out at the onlie costs and charg^s of the said William Shakespeare his heires or assignes. WHICH SAID dwelling house or Tenement, and other the premisses above by theis prñts mencōned to bee

6

bargayned

bargayned and sould the saide Henry Walker late purchased and had to him his heires and assignes for ever of Mathie Bacon of Graies Inne in the Countie of Midd̄ gentleman, by Indenture bearing date the fifteenth day of October in the yeare of our Lord god one thousand six hundred and fower, and in the yeares of the reigne of our said Sovereigne Lord king James of his realmes of England ffrance and Ireland the second, and of Scotland the eight and thirtith: **TO HAVE AND TO HOLDE** the said dwelling house or Tenement, shoppes, cello's, sollers, plott of ground and all and singuler other the premisses above by theis p̄ntes mencōned to bee bargayned and sould and every part and parcell thereof wth thappurtenānts, vnto the said William Shakespeare, William Johnson, John Jackson, and John Hemyng, their heires and assignes for ever: **To thonlie & proper v̄sē** and behoofe of the said William Shakespeare, William Johnson, John Jackson, and John Hemyng, their heires and assignes for ever. **AND THE SAID** Henry Walker for himselfe, his heires, executo's, administrato's, and assignes, and for every of them, doth Covenānt, promise and graunt to and wth the said William Shakespeare his heires and assignes by theis p̄ntes in forme following, that is to saie, That hee the said Henry Walker his heires executo's administrato's or assignes shall and will cleerlie acquite, exonerate, and discharge or otherwise from tyme to tyme and at all tymes hereafter well and sufficientlie save and keepe

keepe harmles the said William Shakespeare his heires and assignes and every of them of for and concernyng the bargayne and sale of the premisses, and the said bargayned premisses and every part and parcell thereof wth thappurtenāncs of and from all and almaner of former bargaynes, sales, guifts, graunts, leases, statuts, Recognizauncs, Joynters, dowers, intailes, lymittacōn and lymittacōns of vse and vses, extents and judgments, execucōns, Annuities, and of and from all and every other charg^s titles and incumbrancs whatsoever, wittinglie and wilfullie had, made comitted, suffered, or donne by him the said Henry Walker, or any other under his authoritie or right, before thensealing and deliverye of theis p̄ntes; Except the rents and services to the Cheefe Lord or Lords of the fee or fees of the premisses from hensforth, for or in respecte of his or their seignorie or seignories onlie to be due and donne. AND FURTHER the saide Henry Walker for himselfe his heires executo's and administrato's and for every of them, doth covenānt, promisse and graunt to and wth the said William Shakespeare, his heires and assignes, by theis p̄ntes in forme following; that is to saie, That for and notwth - standing any acte or thing donne by him the said Henry Walker to the Contrary, hee the said William Shakespeare his heires and assignes shall or lawfullie maye peaceablie & quietlie have, holde, occupie and enioye the said dwelling house or Tenement, Cello's Sollers and all and singuler other the premisses above by theis p̄ntes
menc̄ned

mencōned to bee bargayned and soule and every part and parcell thereof w^{ch} thappurtenānces, and the rents yssues and profitts thereof and of every part and parcell thereof to his and their owne vse receive perceave take and enioye fromhensforth forever w'out the lett troble eviccōn or interrupsōn of the said Henry Walker his heires executo's or administrato's or any of them, or of or by any other person or persons w^{ch} have or may before the date hereof pretende to have any lawfull estate, righte, title, vse, or interest, in or to the premisses or any parcell thereof, by from or under him the said Henry Walker. AND ALSO that hee the said Henry Walker and his heires and all and every other person and persons and their heires which have or that shall lawfullie and rightfullie have or clayme to have any lawfull and rightfull estate, right, title, or interest, in or to the premisses or any parcell thereof, by from or vnder the said Henry Walker, shall and will from tyme to tyme & at all tymes fromhensforth for and during the space of three yeares now next ensuing at or vpon the reasonable request and costs and charg^s in the lawe of the said William Shakespeare his heires and assignes doe make knowledge and suffer to bee donne made and knowledge all and every such further lawfull and reasonable acte and acts, thing and things, devise and devises in the law whatsoever, for the conveying of the premises, bee it by deed or deeds inrolled or not inrolled, inrolment of theis pnts, fyne, feoffament,

feoffament, recoverye, release, confirmacōn, or otherwise, wth warrantie of the said Henry Walker and his heires against him the said Henry Walker and his heires onlie, or otherwise wthout warrantie, or by all any or as many of the wayes meanes and devises aforesaid, as by the said William Shakespeare his heires or assignes or his or their Councell learned in the lawe shalbee reasonable devised or advised, for the further, better, and more perfect assurance suertie suermaking and conveying of all and singuler the premisses and every parcell thereof wth thappurtenāncs vnto the said William Shakespeare his heires and assignes forever to th' use and in forme aforesaid, AND FURTHER THAT all and every fyne and fynes to be levyed, recoveryes to be suffered, estats, and assurances at any tyme or tymes hereafter to bee had made executed or passed by or betweene the said parties of the premisses or of any parcell thereof, shalbee, and shalbee esteemed, adjudged, deemed, and taken to bee, to th' onlie and proper vse and behoofe of the said William Shakespeare, his heires, and assignes forever; and to none other vse, intent or purpose. IN WITNESSE whereof the said parties to theis Jndentures Jnterchaungable have sett their seales. Yeoven the day and yeares first above written.

William Shaksp̄r

W^m Johnson Jo: Jackson.

Sealed

Sealed and delivered by the said William Shakespeare, William Johnson, and John Jackson, in the p̄nce of Will: Atkinson

Ed : Oquery

Robert Andrewes Scr.

Henry Lawrence servant to the same Scr.

NUMB. III.

DECLARATION OF TRUST BY JOHN HEMINGES
AND OTHERS.

THIS INDENTURE made the tenth day of february in the yeres of the reigne of our soveraigne Lord James, by the grace of God kinge of England Scotland ffrance and Ireland, defender of the faith, &c. That is to say, of England, ffrance, and Ireland, the fifteenth, and of Scotland the one and fiftith; Between John Jackson and John Hemyng of London, gentlemen, and William Johnson, Citizen and Vintnier of London, of thone part, and John Greene of Clements Inn in the County of Midd. gent. and Matthew Morryes of Stretford vpon Avon in the County of Warwick gent. of thother part; WITNESSETH, that the said John Jackson, Iohn Hemyng, and William Johnson, as well for and in performance of the confidence and trust in them reposed by

William Shakespeare, deceased, late of Stretford aforesaid, gent., and to thend and intent that the lands tenem^{ts} and hereditam^{ts} hereafter in theis pñts mencōned and expressed, may be conveyed and assured according to the true intent and meaning of the last will and testam^t of the said William Shakespeare, and for the some of ffyve shillings of lawfull money of England to them payd, for and on behalf of Susanna Hall, one of the daughters of the said William Shakespeare and now wife of Iohn Hall of Stretford aforesaid gent. before then-sealling and deliury of theis pñts, Have aliened bargained sold and confirmed, and by theis pñts doe and every of them doth fully cleerely and absolutely alien bargaine sell and confirme vnto the said Iohn Greene and Matthew Morry, their heires and assignes for ever, All that dwelling house or tenem^t with thapp^tuñts scitua^t and being within the precinct, circuite, and compase of the late Black-frieres, London, sometymes in the tenure of James Gardyner Esquier, and since that in the tenure of Iohn ffortescue gent, and, now ²⁹ or late being in the tenure or occupacōn of one William Ireland or of his Assignee or Assignes, abutting vpon a street leadinge downe to

²⁹ These words are merely copied from Walker's Conveyance to Shakspeare in March 1612-13. From a subsequent part of this deed it appears that John Robinson was now the tenant in possession, under a lease made to him by Shakspeare for a term of years.

Puddle Wharfe, on the east part, right against the kings Ma^{ty} wardrobe, part of which tenem^t is erected over a great gate leading to a capitall messuage which sometyes was in the tenure of William Blackwell Esquier deceased, and since that in the tenure or occupacōn of the right Hono^{tbl} Henry Earle of Northumberland, And also all that plot of ground on the west side of the said tenem^t, which was lately inclosed with boords on twoe sides thereof by Anne Bacon widdow, soe farr and in such sort as the same was inclosed by the said Anne Bacon, and not otherwise; and being on the third side inclosed with an ould Brick wall; Which said plot of ground was sometyes parcell and taken out of a great peece of voyd ground lately vsed for a garden; And also the soyle wherevpon the said tenem^t standeth; And also the said Brickwall and boords which doe inclose the said plot of ground; with free entry, access, ingres, egres, and regres, in by and through the said great gate and yarde there vnto the vsuall dore of the said tenem^t; And also all and singuler cellers sollars roomes lights easem^{ts} profitts comodities and hereditam^{ts} whatsoever to the said dwelling house or tenem^t belonging or in any wise apperteyning, And the revercōn and revercōns whatsoever of all and singuler the premisses and of every parcell thereof; And also all rents and yerely profitts whatsoever reserued and from henceforth to grow due and payable vpon what-

soeuer lease demisse or graunt, leases demises or graunts, made of the premisses or any parcell thereof; And also all thestate, right, title, interest, property, vse, clayme, and demaund whatsoever, which they the said John Jackson, John Hemynge, and William Johnson, now have or any of them hath or of right may, might, shoold, or ought to have in the premises: To HAUE AND TO HOLDE the said dwelling howse or tenem^t, lights, cellers, sollers, plot of ground, and all and singuler other the premisses aboue by theis pⁿts mencōned to be bargained and sold, and every part and parcell thereof, with thapp^r-tⁿts, vnto the said John Green and Mathew Morrys their heires and assignes foreuer; To the vse and behoofes hereafter in theis pⁿts declared mencōned expressed and lymitted, and to none other vse, behoofe, intent, or purpose: That is to say, to the vse and behoofe of the aforesaid Susanna Hall for and during the terme of her naturall life, and after her deceas to the vse and behoofe of the first sonne of her body lawfully yssueing, and of the heires males of the body of the said first sonne lawfully yssueing; And for the want of such heires to the vse and behoofe of the second sonne of the body of the said Susanna lawfully yssueing, and of the heires males of the body of the said second sonne lawfully yssueing; and for want of such heires to the vse of the third sonne of the body of the said Susanna lawfully yssueing and of the heires males of the body of the said

said third son lawfully yssueing; And for want of such heires to the vse and behoofe of the fowerth, fiveth, sixt, and seaventh sonnes of the body of the said Susanna lawfully yssueing, and of the severall heires males of the severall bodyes of the said fowerth, fiveth, sixt, and seaventh sonnes, lawfully yssueing, in such manner as it is before lymitted to be and remeyne to the first, second, and third sonnes of the body of the said Susanna lawfully yssueing, and to their heires males as aforesaid; And for default of such heires to the vse and behoofe of Elizabeth hall daughter of the said Susanna Hall and of the heires males of her body lawfully yssueing; and for default of such heires to the vse and behoofe of Judyth Quiney now wife of Thomas Quiney of Stretford aforesaid Vintner, one other of the daughters of the said William Shakespeare and of the heires males of the body of the said Judyth lawfully yssueing; And for default of such yssue to the vse and behoofe of the right heires of the said William Shakespeare forever. AND THE SAID John Jackson for himself, his heires, executors, admīstrators and assignes, and for every of them, doth coveñt, promise, and graunt, to and with the said John Green and Mathew Morrys and either of them, their or either of their heires and assignes, by theis pñts, That he the said John Jackson, his heires, executors, admīstrs or assignes, shall and will from tyme to tyme and at all tymes hereafter within convenient tyme after every reasonable

reasonable request to him or them made, well and sufficiently save and keepe harmeles the said bargained premisses and every part and parcell thereof, of and from all and all manner of former bargaines, sales, guifts, graunts, leases, statuts, recognizauncs, joynctures, dowers, intayles, vses, extents, iudgem^{ts} executiōns, annewyties, and of and from all other charges, titles, and incombrauncs whatsoever, wittingly and willingly had, made, comitted, or done by him the said John Jackson alone, or joynctly with any other person or persons whatsoever; Except the rente and servics to the Cheiffe Lord or Lords of the fee or fees of the premisses from henceforth to be due and of right accustomed to be done, And Except one lease and demise of the premisses with thapp'tnncs heretofore made by the said William Shakespeare, together with them the said John Jackson, John Hemynge, and William Johnson, vnto one John Robinson, now Tennant of the said premisses, for the terme of certen yeres yet to come and unexpired; As by the same wherevnto relacōn be had at large doth appeare. AND THE SAID John Hemynge for him self, his heires, executors, adm̄istrators, and assignes, and for every of them, doth coven̄nt, promise, and graunt, to and with the said John Greene and Mathew Morrys, and either of them their and either of their heires and assignes, by theis pr̄ets, That he the said John Hemynge, his heires, exe-
cutors,

cutors, admistrators, or assignes, shall and will from tyme to tyme and at all tymes hereafter, within convenient tyme after every reasonable request, well and sufficiently save and keepe harmeles the said bargained premisses and every part and parcell thereof of and from all and all manner of former bargaines, sales, guifts, graunts, leases, statuts, recognizauncs, ioynctures, dowers, intayles, vses, extents, judgem^t executōns, Annewyties, and of and from all other charges, titles, and incombraunces whatsoever, wittingly and willingly had, made, comitted, or done by him the said John Hemyng alone, or ioynctly with any other person or persons whatsoever; Except the rentes and service to the Chieffe Lord or Lords of the fee or fees of the premisses from henceforth to be due and of right accustomed to be done, And except one lease and demise of the premisses with thapp^ttnants heretofore made by the said William Shakspeare together with them the said John Jackson, John Hemyng and William Johnson vnto one John Robinson, now Tennant of the said premisses, for the terme of certen yeres yet to come and vnexpired, As by the same wherevnto relacōn be had at large doth appeare. AND THE SAID William Johnson for him self, his heires, executors, admīst^{ors} and assignes, and for every of them, doth covenānt promise, and graunt, to and with the said John Green and Mathew Morryes, and either of them, their and either of their

6

heires

heires and assignes, by theis pñts, That he the said William Johnson, his heires, executors, admistrs, or assignes, shall and will from tyme to tyme and at all tymes hereafter within convenient tyme after every reasonable request, well and sufficiently saue and keepe harmeles the said bargained premisses and every part and parcell thereof of and from all and all manner of former bargaines, sales, giufts, graunts, leases, statuts, recognizauncs, ioynctures, dowers, intayles, vses, extents, iudgements, execucōns, Annewyties, and of and from all other charges, titles, and incombrauncs whatsoever, wittingly and willingly had made comitted or done by him the said William Johnson alone, or ioyntly with any other person or persons whatsoever; Except the rents and service to the Cheiff Lord or Lords of the fee or fees of the premisses from henceforth to be due and of right accustomed to be done, And except one lease and demise of the premisses with thapp'tnncs heretofore made by the said William Shakespeare together with them the said John Jackson John Hemynge and William Johnson vnto one John Robinson, now Tennant of the said premisses, for the terme of certen yeres yet to come and unexpired, As by the same wherevnto relation be had at large doth appeare.

IN WITNES whereof the parties aforesaid to theis pñte Indentures have interchaungeably sett their
hands

hands and sealls. Yeoven the day and yeres first
about written 1617.

Jo : Jackson John Heminges Wm Johnson

Sealed & delyvered by the
within named

John Jackson in the pñce of

Roc : Swale

John Prise

Sealed & delyvered by the w'thinamed

Willm Johnson in the p'sence of

Nickolas Harysone

John Prise

Sealed and delyvered by the w'thinamed

John Hemynges in the p'nce of

Matt^y Benson

John Prise

Memorand. that the xith day of ffebruarye in the
yeres within written John Robinson tenant of the
p'mysse w'thinmencōed did geve and delyver vnto
John Greene w'thinamed to the vse of Susanna
Hall w'thinamed five pence of lawfull money of
England in name of Attornment in the p'sence of

Matt : Benson

John Prise

by me Richarde Tylor

NUMB. IV.

AGREEMENT BETWEEN PHILIP HENSLOWE AND
EDWARD ALLEYN, AND THOMAS DOWNTON,³⁰
PLAYER.

THIS INDENTURE made the day
of 1608, And in the yeres of the
roigne of our sov'aigne Lord James, by the Grace
of God kinge of Englande, ffrance, and Ireland,

³⁰ Thomas Downton, whose name in Henslowe's Register is sometimes written *Doughton*, and sometimes *Dowten*, was originally a HIRELING in his theatre, as appears by the following entries :

“ Mdom that the 6 of october 1597 Thomas Dowten came & bownd hime sealf unto me in xxxxiⁱ in a somepsett by the Receving of iijd of me before witnes. the covenant is this, that he shold from the daie above written untell sraftid next come ij yeares to pleye in my howse & in no other about London publickley, yf he do with owt my consent to forfet unto me this some of money above written. Wittnes to this

“ E. Alleyn Robarte Shawe W^m borne John Synger Dicke Jonnes.”

“ Thomas Downton the 25 of Jenewary 1599 [1599-1600] did hire as his covenante servant for ij yeres to begyne at Shrofte tewsdays next & he to geve hime viijs. a weeke *as long as they playe*, & after they lye styllle one fortnyght then to give hime halfe wages, Witnes P. H. & Edward Browne & Charles Massey.” Henslowe's Register, MS.

defender

defender of the faith, &c. the Sixt, and of Scotland the twoe and ffortith, Betweene Phillipp Henslowe and Edward Alleyn, of the p'ishe of St. Saviours in Southwark, in the county of Surry, Esquiors, on th'one p'tye, and Thomas Downton of the p'ishe of St. Gyles without Criplegate, London, gentleman, on th'other p'tye, WITNESSETH, That the said Phillipp Henslowe and Edward Alleyn, for and in consideracōn of the some of *Twenty and seaven pounds and Ten shillings* of lawfull mony of England to them in hand att or before thensealinge hereof by the saide Thomas Downton paid, whereof and wherew'h they the saide Phillipp Henslowe and Edward Alleyn doe acknowledge them selves well and truly contented, satisfied and paide, by theis p'sents haue demised, leased, and to farme letten, and by theis p'sents doe demise, lease, and to farme lett, vnto the saide Thomas Downton *one-eight parte of a ffowerth part of all such clere gaynes in mony as shall hereafter duringe the terme herevnder demised arrise, growe, accrew, or become due, or properly belong vnto the saide Phillipp Henslowe and Edward Alleyn, or either of them, their or either of their executors or assignes, for or by reason of any stage-playinge, or other exercise comoditie or vse whatsoever used or to be used or exercised, w'bin the play-howse of the saide Phillipp Henslow and Edward Alleyn, ccommonly called THE FORTUNE, situate and beinge betweene Whitcrosse streete and Goldinge lane, in the*

p'ishe of St Gyles w^hout Crippe gate London in the County of Midd: *And the saide eighte parte of a fflowerth p'te of all the saide clere gaynes properly belonginge to the saide Philipp Henslowe and Edward Alleyn, to be paid by the saide Philipp Henslowe and Edward Alleyn or one of them, their or one of their executors or assignes, vnto the saide Thomas Downton or his assignes, eu'y day that any play or other exercise shall be acted or exercised in the play howse aforesaide upon the sharinge of the monyes gathered and gotten at eu'y of the same playes and exercises, as heretofore hath byn used and accustommed:* TO HAUE AND TO HOULDE and receive the saide eight parte of a fflowerth p'te of the saide clere gaynes to be gotten by playinge or by any other exercise whatsoeu', and to be paide in manner and forme aforesaide vnto the saide Thomas Downton, his executors and assignes, from the feast of St. Michaell tharchaungell last past before the date hereof vnto thend and terme of Thirteene Yeres from thence next ensuinge and fully to be compleate and ended, in as full large ample and beneficiall manner and forme, to all intents, construccōns, and purposes, as they the saide Phillip Henslowe and Edward Alleyn, or either of them, or the executors or assignes of them or either of them, might, should, or ought to haue had, held, enioyed, received, and taken the same as aforesaide, if this p'sent Indenture had never beene had nor made: YIELDINGE and payinge therefore yerely

yerely duringe the saide terme, vnto the saide Phillip Henslowe and Edward Alleyn, their heires, executors or assignes, att the saide playe howse called the FORTUNE, *ten shillings* of lawfull mony of England, att fower feasts or termes of the yere, (that is to say) att the feasts of the birth of our Lord God, Thanūciacōn of our lady, the Natiuity of St. John Baptist, and St. Michaell Th'archaugell, or w'hin ffowerteene dayes next ensuinge eu'y of the same feast dayes, by euen porcōns: AND THE SAIDE Thomas Downton for him, his executors, and adm'strators, doth coven'nte and graunte to and w'ih the saide Phillip Henslowe and Edward Alleyn, and either of them, their and either of their heires, executors, and assignes, by theis p'sents, in manner and forme followinge, that is to say, that he the saide Thomas Downton, his executors, administrators or assignes, shall att his or their owne p'per costs and charges *beare, pay, and discharge one equall eight p'te of a ffowertth p'te of all such necessary and needfull charges as shalbe bestowed or layed forth in the newe buildinge or repairinge of the saide play howse, duringe the saide terme of thirteene yeres w'thout fraud or covyn:* AND THAT *he the saide Thomas Downton shall not att any tyme hereafter duringe the saide terme giue over the facultye or qualitye of playinge, but shall in his owne p'son exercise the same to the best and most benefitt he can w'ihin the play howse aforesaide, duringe the tyme aforesaide, vnles he shal become vnhabable by*
reason

reason of sicknes or any other infirmitye, or vnles it be wth the consent of the saide Phillip Henslowe and Edward Alleyn, or either of them, their executors or assignes : AND that he the saide Thomas Downton shall not att any tyme hereafter during the saide terme of Thirteene yeres play or exercise the facultye of stage playing in any Comon play-house now erected, or hereafter to be erected w^{thin} the saide Cittye of London or Twoe myles Compasse thereof, other then in the saide play-house called the FORTUNE w^{thout} the speciall licence will consent & agreement of the saide Phillip Henslowe and Edward Alleyn or one of them, their or one of their heires executors or assignes, first therefore had and obteyned in wrytinge vnder their hands and seales. And that he the saide Thomas Downton shall not att any tyme hereafter duringe the saide terme, giue, graunte, bargaine, sell or otherwise doe away or dep'te wth the saide Eight p'te of a fowerth p'te of the saide clere gaynes before demised, nor any p'cell thereof, to any p'son or p'sons whatsoeu' w^{thout} the like consent, licence, will, and agreement of them the saide Philipp Henslowe and Edward Alleyn or either of them, their or either of their heires, executors, admīstrators, or assignes, first therefore had and obteyned in wryting vnder their hands and seales for the same as aforesaide. AND THE SAID Philipp Henslowe and Edward Alleyn for them and either of them their and either of their heires executors & admīstrators doe Co-
ven'nte

ven'nte and graunte to and w^h the saide Thomas Downton his executors & assignes, by theis p'sents, That he the saide Thomas Downton, his executors and assignes (Payinge the saide yerely rent of Ten shillings in forme aforesaide and p'forming all other Coven'nts, graunts, articles and agreements abovesaide on his and their p'ts to be p'formed) shall or may duringe the saide terme of Thirteene yeres, haue, hold, receave, and enjoy, the saide Eighte p'te of a fflowerth p'te of all the saide clere gaynes to be gotten by playing or any other exercise as aforesaide in manner and forme aforesaide, accordinge to the true intent and meaninge of theis p'sents, w^hout the lett, trouble, molestacōn, deniall, or interrupcōn of the saide Philipp Henslowe and Edward Alleyn, or either of them, their or either of their heires or assignes, or of any other p'son or p'sons by their either or any of their meanes, right, tittle, interest, or p'curement. PROVIDED alwaies, That if it shall happen the saide yerely rent of Ten shillings or any p'cell thereof to be behinde and vnpaide in p'te or in all by the saide space of fflowerteene dayes next over or after any feast day of paymente thereof abovesaide, in w^{ch} the same ought to be paide (being lawfully demaunded att the place aforesaide) Or if the saide Thomas Downton, his executors, administrators, or assignes, or any of them, doe infrindge or breake any of the coven'nts graunts articles or agreements abouesaide on his

or their p'tes to be p'formed, contrary to the tenore & true meaninge of theis p'sents, That then and from thenceforth this p'sent Lease, Demise, and graunte, & eu'y coven'nte, graunt, & article herein conteyned, on the p'te & behalfe of the said Philipp and Edward or either of them, their or either of their heires excuto^{rs} or Ass^{ns} from henceforth to be p'formed, shalbe vtterly void frustrate & of none effect, to all intents construccion and purposes, Any thing herein conteyned to the contrary thereof in any wise notwithstandinge. IN WITNES whereof the said p'tyes to theis p'sent Indentures sunderly haue sett their hands and Seales. Yeoven the day & yeres first abouewritten.³¹

³¹ This deed was not executed.

THE END.

Pag. 103. l. 15. for *from*, r. *to*.

105. l. 21. for *circular*, r. *oval*.

278. l. 13. [*In part of the impression,*] for *choosing*,
r. *liking*.

The following PROSPECTUS, which was published last year, is added here only for the sake of the notices subjoined to it, which by being more widely circulated may perhaps be the means of illustrating the history of the life of Shakspeare, by drawing from some hitherto unexplored Repository papers of a very different complexion from the miserable trash we have now been examining.

PROPOSALS for an Edition of SHAKSPEARE, in Quarto, decorated with Engravings, having been some time ago issued out by Mr. MALONE, and the Bookseller who undertook the said Work having relinquished it on account of the present Season being unfavourable to such expensive Undertakings, Mr. MALONE thinks it proper to give this publick Notice, that the Proposals above-mentioned are to be considered as a Nullity.—Reverting, however, to his original idea, (from which he was very reluctantly induced to depart,) that of giving a new and splendid Edition of the PLAYS and POEMS of this Author WITHOUT ENGRAVINGS, he intends to present the Publick with a SECOND EDITION of his former Work,

IN TWENTY VOLUMES, ROYAL OCTAVO,

On a larger Paper and Type,

BOTH FOR THE TEXT AND COMMENTARIES, than have ever been employed in any Edition of Shakspeare with Notes: which will be issued out either in two deliveries, or the whole together, as may suit the convenience of the Editor.

The first Volume will be appropriated to an
entirely
NEW LIFE OF SHAKSPEARE,
(COMPILED FROM ORIGINAL AND AUTHEN-
TICK DOCUMENTS,)

Which is now nearly ready for the Press ;

The Second and Third to Mr. MALONE'S
HISTORY OF THE STAGE CONSIDERABLY
ENLARGED,

and his other DISSERTATIONS illustrative of this Poet's Works ; together with the Prefaces of former Editors, to which some new Elucidations will be added. The twentieth Volume will comprize Shakspeare's POEMS, and the remaining sixteen his PLAYS ; (which will be arranged in the Order in which they are supposed by Mr. Malone to have been written ;) with the Editor's Commentaries, as well as those of his Predecessors, and several new Annotations. To the Plays it is not proposed to annex any Engravings ; but the Life of Shakspeare will be ornamented with a Delineation of his Bust at Stratford ; (of the Head of which Mr. Malone is possessed of a FACSIMILE ;) the engraved Portraits of Sir Thomas Lucy and Mr. John Combe, from Drawings made on purpose for this Work in 1793, by Mr. Sylvester Harding ; and also with an Engraving of Shakspeare, not from any FACTITIOUS or FICTITIOUS Representation of that Poet, but from a Drawing, of the same size with the original, made in 1786 by Mr. Humphry, from the ONLY authentick Portrait now known, that which was formerly in the Possession of Sir William D'Avenant, and now belongs to the Heir of the late Duke of Chandos.

* * * Though Mr. Malone has already obtained several very curious and original Materials for the LIFE OF SHAKSPEARE, he will be extremely obliged by any further Communications on that Subject. He has always thought that much Information might be procured, illustrative of the History of this extraordinary Man, if Persons possessed of ancient Papers would take the trouble to examine them, or permit others to peruse them; and he has already pointed out the sources from which such Information may probably be derived. Shakspeare's Grand-daughter, Lady Barnard, (the only Child of Susanna Hall,) died in January, 1669-70; and by her last Will appointed her kinsman Mr. EDWARD BAGLEY, Citizen of London, her Executor, and Residuary Legatee. This Person, (who, it is believed, was not related to Shakspeare, but kinsman either to Sir John Barnard of Abington near Northampton, or to the Family of Hall or Nash,) must have become possessed of all her Coffers and Cabinets, in which undoubtedly were several of her Grandfather's Papers. When and where Mr. Bagley died, is uncertain, no Will of his having been discovered in the Prerogative Office, though search has been made there for fifty years subsequent to 1670, to ascertain those Facts, as well as the Name of the Person to whom his Effects descended. But if any Person be now living who derives any Property from the said Mr. Bagley, he is requested to examine all such Papers as have descended to him, with the View already mentioned.

On the Death of Sir John Barnard in 1674, Administration of his Effects having been granted to his Daughters (by a former Wife) and their Husbands, and they being entitled under Lady

Barnard's Will to keep Possession of the NEW-PLACE (Shakspeare's House in Stratford) for six Months after the Death of Sir John, some of the Poet's Papers might have fallen into their hands. They were, Elizabeth, married to Henry Gilbert of Locko in the County of Derby, Esq. Mary, married to Thomas Higgs of Colesborne, Esq. and Eleanor, the Wife of Samuel Cotton, Esq.

SHAKSPEARE having purchased some Property from Ralph Hubaud, Esq. (Brother of Sir John Hubaud, of Ipsley in Warwickshire, Knt.) some Instrument executed by the Poet, on that Occasion, may perhaps be found among the Title-Deeds of that Gentleman's Estates, in whatever Hands they may now be :—And if any descendant of Mr. John Heminges be now living, he probably has among the Deeds and Papers of his Ancestor, Mr. Heminges' Accompt-Books and theatrical Contracts, which would throw much Light on the History of the Stage at the period when Shakspeare lived. Mr. John Heminges died in October 1630, leaving at least one Son, William, who died about the Year 1650; and four married Daughters; Alice, the Wife of John Atkins; Rebecca, married to Captain William Smith; Margaret, married to Thomas Sheppard; and another Daughter, the wife of a person of the Name of Merefield; from which Families also some Information may possibly be derived.



